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AND TECHNIQUES
FOR THE BIG MEAL

SAVEUR

Savor a World of Authentic Cuisine

Festive
Fall
Desserts

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AMERICAN
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Holiday Dishes

*Seasonal favorites old and new, from
herb-roasted turkey to luscious pumpkin cheesecake*

Pumpkin
Cheesecake
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recipe

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In Paris, *maghrébin* cuisine—the foods of Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco—is richer than ever. Whether it's street food, like flaky Algerian crêpes and overstuffed Tunisian tuna sandwiches, or luxurious couscous platters and meaty tagines from Morocco, these flavors are some of the city's most exciting. *By Jay Cheshire*

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On Virginia's Eastern Shore, centuries-old customs and local bounty converge in a Thanksgiving feast like no other. Here, roasted locally farmed oysters, home-grown figs in syrup, and tart okra pickles take pride of place on the table alongside the traditional holiday turkey. *By Bernard L. Herman*

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The Garifuna people of Honduras, descendants of Africans and Native Americans, are a nation within a nation, with a language, history, and cuisine all their own. From hearty plantain mashes to warming chicken stews and fish soups creamy with coconut milk, in so many ways, the foods define the community. *By Betsy Andrews*

Cover Pumpkin Cheesecake PHOTOGRAPH BY BETH ROONEY

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: BETH ROONEY; LANDON NORDEMAN; PENNY DE LOS SANTOS

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5 SENSES TASTING PROCESS

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SOUND

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SCENT

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In Baghdad, Iraq, on Thanksgiving, an American soldier says a prayer. *Photo by Joe Raedle/ Getty Images*

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CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: TODD COLEMAN; NAOMI DUGUID; TODD COLEMAN (2); EVANS/THREE LIONS/GETTY IMAGES

Alexia
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IN TOUCH
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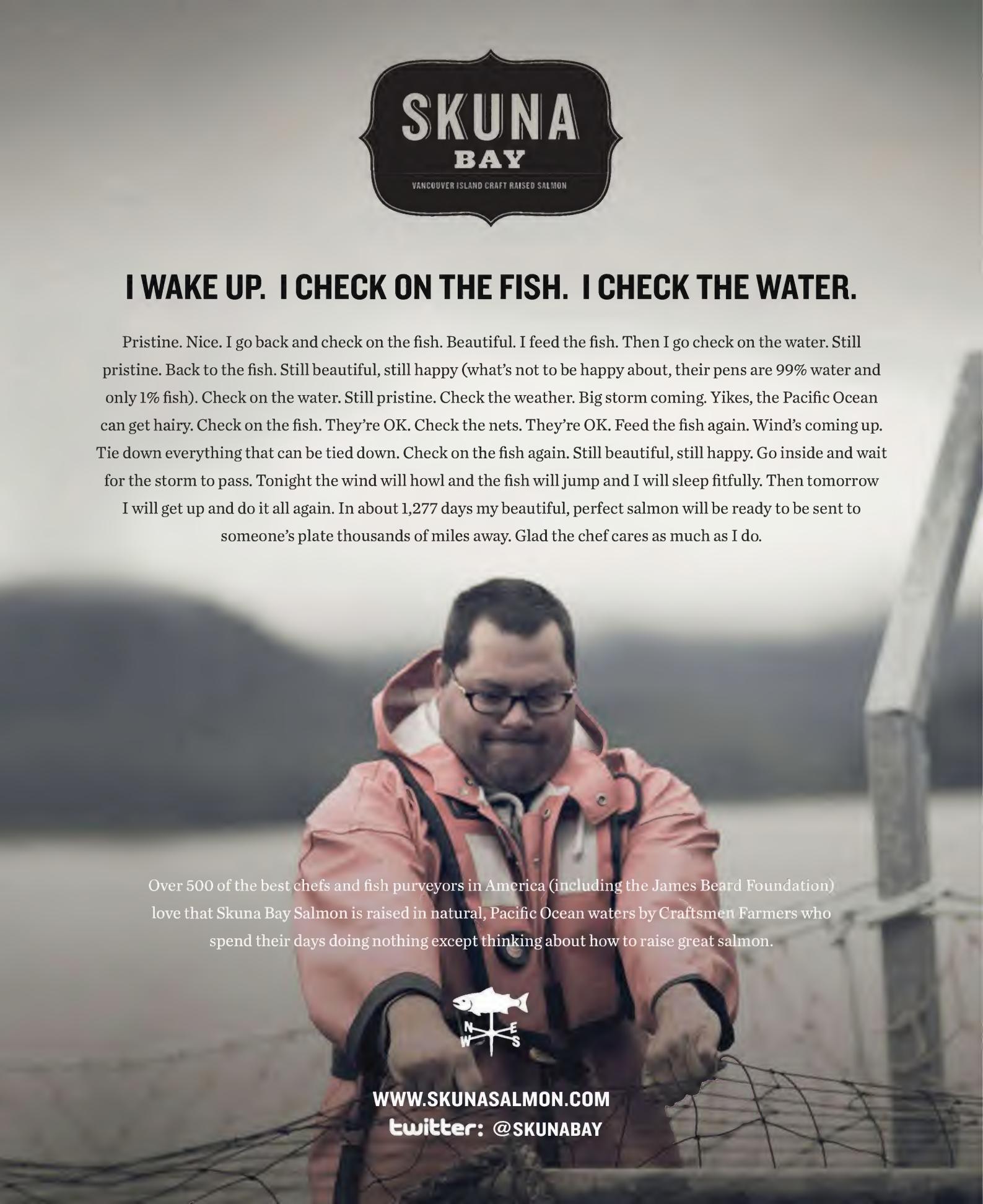
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I WAKE UP. I CHECK ON THE FISH. I CHECK THE WATER.

Pristine. Nice. I go back and check on the fish. Beautiful. I feed the fish. Then I go check on the water. Still pristine. Back to the fish. Still beautiful, still happy (what's not to be happy about, their pens are 99% water and only 1% fish). Check on the water. Still pristine. Check the weather. Big storm coming. Yikes, the Pacific Ocean can get hairy. Check on the fish. They're OK. Check the nets. They're OK. Feed the fish again. Wind's coming up. Tie down everything that can be tied down. Check on the fish again. Still beautiful, still happy. Go inside and wait for the storm to pass. Tonight the wind will howl and the fish will jump and I will sleep fitfully. Then tomorrow I will get up and do it all again. In about 1,277 days my beautiful, perfect salmon will be ready to be sent to someone's plate thousands of miles away. Glad the chef cares as much as I do.



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FIRST



Feeding a Hunger

The most cherished stories develop like a slow-cooked dish

SOMETIMES THE JOURNEY to our favorite foods takes years. I first found out about the Garifuna (whose cuisine is featured in this issue) as a graduate student in anthropology. I read about how these descendants of native Carib Indians and Africans who resisted subjugation had kept their distinctive culture intact, from the beginnings of colonialism in the West Indies to today, on Central America's Caribbean shores. Their fortitude impressed me, and I hoped to learn more about them one day, perhaps firsthand.

That was more than two decades ago. Though I never did get my Ph.D., the story of the Garifuna stayed with me. So when I started working at *SAVEUR*, the question arose: *What about Garifuna food?* And that's how I ended up in Honduras (that's me, above, with my Garifuna friends, Teofila Valerio, left, and Lina Hortensia Martinez), reporting the story on page 72, "Cassava Nation."

But first I went to the Bronx, New York. Thousands of Garifuna live there; one of them is Blanca Arzu. I got Arzu's number from José Francisco Ávila, the president of a group called the Garifuna Coalition, who told me that this banker and part-time cater-

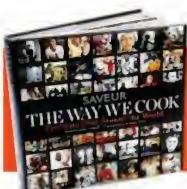
er is the best Garifuna cook he knows. When I called her up, she invited me to lunch.

The meal took great skill, time, and effort to prepare. In her Bronx kitchen, Arzu cooked with alacrity. ("Oh my," she said, tasting midway, "this is already delicious!") She insisted upon mashing her plantains in an enormous mortar and pestle. ("A food processor is not the same, honey. It will never be the same.")

The food she served was a revelation. Profoundly simple and delicious, the green-banana dumplings and fish-and-coconut soup felt intensely close to the seaside where Garifuna culture arose. Even on a wintery day in the Bronx, nearly 2,000 miles from her hometown of Santa Fe, Honduras, that meal told me where Blanca Arzu was from.

And it told me, too, something that we are reminded of time and again at *SAVEUR*: The most fundamental foods not only fuel the body; they also nourish the spirit. They are the very essence of a cook's culture. It had taken 22 years to feed my hunger to know more about the Garifuna. I was lucky, and grateful, that what I learned was served to me in such a delectable form.

—BETSY ANDREWS, Deputy Editor



THE WAY WE COOK From *SAVEUR* comes the perfect holiday gift: a breathtaking photography book that chronicles global cooking. We've selected the best of thousands of images taken during more than a decade of reporting on cooks as they create the dishes that define them. Also included are 49 classic recipes. On sale November 6; available on Amazon.com.



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fig. 1 dill weed

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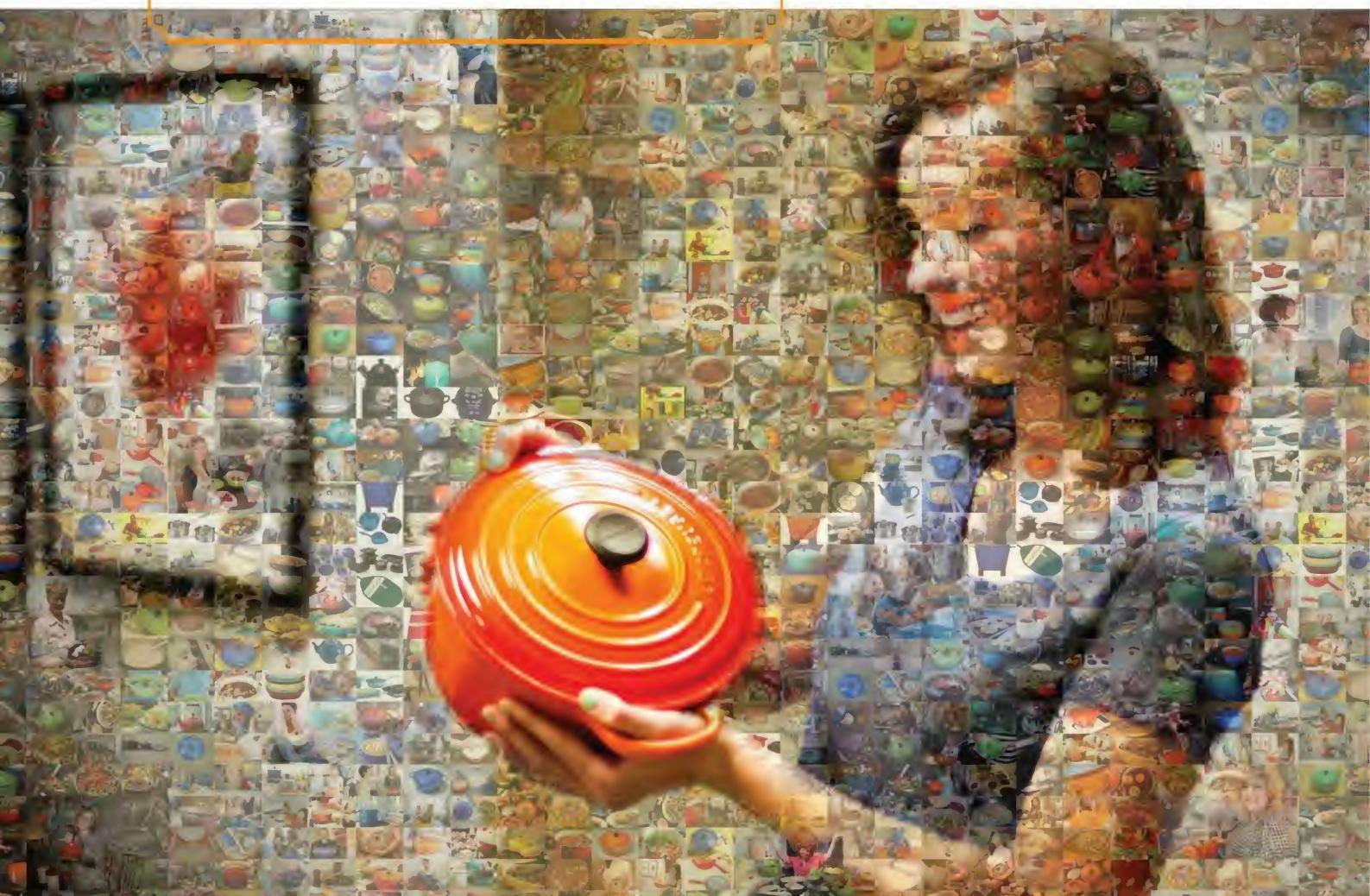
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ALL WHO COOK WITH LOVE.



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FARE

Dreams and Schemes From the World of Food, Plus Agenda and More



Meat of the Matter

In Pasadena, California, a Thanksgiving like no other

I'VE NEVER UNDERSTOOD why people complain about roast turkey being dry, or bland, or otherwise not delicious. But then, the turkey the Cabral family sits down to each Thanksgiving at my older sister's apartment in Pasadena isn't the turkey everybody sits down to. When that big, chile-rubbed bird comes to the table, its crisp skin burnished a deep red, it's like, "Yeah. Time to eat."

As a kid, I assumed every family ate a turkey like ours. It wasn't until I was a teenager and started getting interested in cooking that I realized how special my mom's recipe is. When she was growing up in rural Zacatecas, Mexico, meat was a luxury, eaten sparingly. This turkey of hers is an American invention, an artifact of the life she's lived since immigrating to Los Angeles in

1961, but it tells the story of where she comes from, too.

She begins by rubbing the turkey with a spice paste, and from the smell of the ground cinnamon, cloves, and New Mexico and árbol chiles as the turkey roasts, you might think she had a mole or a *birria* on the stove. Slowly, the bird's fat and juices accumulate at the bottom of the pan, along with some of that spice, forming a pool of red gravy that the wings, thighs, and drumsticks cook in almost like a confit. Meanwhile, the exposed skin on the rest of the turkey becomes crisp, dark, and delicious.

The gravy cooks down until it's thick and intense, and we always have soft rolls on hand to mop it up. So why stuff the turkey with more bread? That's my mom's logic, anyway. This

AGENDA

November 2012

November

1–2

DÍA DE TODOS LOS SANTOS Y DÍA DE LOS DIFUNTOS

(All Saints Day and Day of the Dead)
Cusco, Peru

During this Peruvian holiday, families gather to eat and celebrate the lives of their deceased loved ones with Andean specialties. The centerpiece of the feast is *lechón* (suckling pig). While the meat roasts, families buy tamales and *t'anta wawas* (bread shaped like an infant, a symbol of life and death) to be served alongside the pork. On November 2, families congregate at cemeteries, celebrating with music and favorite dishes of those who have passed. More information: turismoperu.info

November

17–18

AMERICA'S HOMETOWN THANKSGIVING

Plymouth, Massachusetts

With a grand parade, military flyovers, tours of the Mayflower II



(a re-creation of the original), and a massive food festival right by the spot where the Pilgrims first landed in 1620, the

town of Plymouth, Massachusetts, throws a weekend-long blowout that puts the first Thanksgiving to shame. The festival features competitions for best chowder and best dessert, as well as a Sunday farmers' market, where visitors can shop for their own Thanksgiving essentials. More information: usathanksgiving.com

November

23

Birthday RICK BAYLESS

1953, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
Rick Bayless, an award-winning chef, TV personality, and cookbook author, is first and foremost recognized for introducing the haute side of Mexican cooking to the United States. Though he came from a barbecue background



(his parents owned Hickory House restaurant in Oklahoma City), after earning a degree in Spanish and

Latin American studies and living in Mexico, Bayless returned to America in 1987 on a mission to share the cuisine in all its complexity, publishing *Authentic Mexican* (William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1987), and opening the country's first fine-dining Mexican restaurant, Frontera Grill in Chicago.

holiday is about meat and more meat, as far as she's concerned, and so the stuffing is a savory ground beef *picadillo* pumped up with chopped green peppers, beets, and green beans, and black olives. On the side we have baked potatoes, because that's what Americans eat with a fancy meal—or so my parents concluded when they dined out in steak houses after coming to the U.S. in the sixties.

Until I started contributing a side of roasted Brussels sprouts a few years ago, there was no other vegetable on the table. Well, there were the candied yams, but we eat those Mexican style, for dessert, stewed in a syrup of *piloncillo* (unrefined sugar) laced with cinnamon and cloves. We each get one whole yam, soft and syrupy, and mash it with a fork before pouring milk over the top. It's not exactly all-American, and it's not strictly Mexican, either. It's pure Cabral. —Javier Cabral

Chile-Rubbed Turkey with Beet Stuffing and Gravy

SERVES 10–12

New Mexico and *árbol* chiles create a sauce similar to a mole that coats the turkey (pictured on page 19), while adding spice and depth.

- 12 tbsp. unsalted butter
- 2 lb. ground beef
- 16 cloves garlic
- 8 ribs celery

- 5 medium carrots
- 3 bunches scallions, minced
- 2 lb. roasted beets, peeled and roughly chopped
- 6 oz. pitted kalamata olives
- 2 cups fresh or frozen corn
- 1 cup cilantro leaves, chopped
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 20 dried New Mexico chiles, stemmed and seeded
- 8 dried chiles de *árbol*, stemmed
- 1 tbsp. ground cumin
- 1 tsp. ground cloves
- 8 Saltine crackers
- 1 16-lb. turkey, thawed, neck and giblets reserved
- 1 medium yellow onion, roughly chopped
- 1 cup flour
- 8 cups chicken or turkey stock

1 Make the stuffing: Heat 4 tbsp. butter in a 12" skillet, over medium-high heat. Add beef; cook, stirring, until well-browned, about 10 minutes. Finely chop half the garlic, 5 ribs celery, and 3 carrots, and add to skillet along with scallions; cook, stirring, until vegetables are soft, about 25 minutes. Transfer to a bowl; add beets, olives, corn, and cilantro. Season with salt and pepper; transfer to a 9" x 13" baking dish. Refrigerate until ready to use.

2 Make the chile sauce: Place both chiles in a bowl; cover with boiling water, and let sit until softened, about 10 minutes. Drain, reserving

2 cups soaking liquid, and transfer chiles to a blender with remaining garlic, cumin, cloves, crackers, and 2 cups soaking liquid. Puree until smooth; set aside.

3 Heat oven to 450°. Arrange neck and giblets on the bottom of a large roasting pan; place turkey, breast side up, in pan. Season with salt and pepper and rub with remaining butter; roast until skin is golden brown, about 1 hour. Reduce oven temperature to 350°, pour chile sauce over turkey, and cook, basting every 30 minutes, until an instant-read thermometer inserted into the thighs reads 165°, about 2 hours. Transfer turkey to a cutting board; set aside. Pour pan drippings through a fine strainer into a bowl; discard solids. Meanwhile, place stuffing in oven; cook until golden browned on top, about 30 minutes; set aside.

4 Meanwhile, make the gravy: Return 1 cup fat from the drippings to pan and place over two burners of the stove; heat over medium-high heat. Roughly chop remaining celery and carrots, and add to skillet along with onion; cook, stirring, until soft, about 15 minutes. Add flour; cook, stirring, until smooth, about 3 minutes. Add stock; boil. Reduce heat to medium; cook, stirring, until gravy thickens, about 15 minutes. Pour through a fine strainer into a serving bowl, and season with salt and pepper. Serve turkey with stuffing and gravy on the side.

On Saveur.com

Bird Is the Word

One advantage of working on the web is that we can track exactly what our readers are looking for on SAVEUR.COM. Each year, it surprises us how early Thanksgiving pops up as a search term. It seems that even at the height of summer, someone, somewhere, is dreaming of the meal they'll cook come fall. Which is why as early as July, we're orchestrating Thanksgiving menus for our readers. We mine the SAVEUR archives for beloved recipes, ask our test kitchen to develop new ones, and begin mapping out meals. From a vegetarian menu to a meaty Southern feast, at least one of our Thanksgiving menus at SAVEUR.COM/TURKEY is bound to help you plan a spectacular holiday meal, no matter how early (or late) you begin. —Anna Stockwell



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Multiple Choice I've made many trips to Burma recently to research my book *Burma: Rivers of Flavor* (Artisan, 2012), but food in this country is so subtle and varied, I never tire of eating it. Burmese food is distinctive, but there are reminders, too, that the nation borders India—the use of shallots as a flavor base, for instance—and the rest of Southeast Asia, with its balance of hot, sour, salty, and sweet tastes, and generous use of fresh vegetables and herbs. The main meal of the day, called *nei lei saa thamin* (meaning "midday food"), eaten at noon, is the one I relish most. In Old Bagan—a village set amid centuries-old Pagan ruins—a wonderful restaurant serves a memorable version. An amazing range of curries, salads, and condiments comes to the table all at once, to be eaten in any order. On a recent trip, I chose beef curry, sweet with shallots and touched with chile heat (pictured in the photo above, at bottom left); and eggplant, crunchy with peanuts (upper right); chile-fried okra (top, center); pickled greens (right); and simmered beans (at center). As always, the meal came with the essentials: a vegetable soup tart with lime (lower right), a plate of raw and steamed vegetables (at top left), and dried-chile sauce and other condiments. And there was rice, the fragrant staple that connected them all. I took a spoonful of rice with a little curry, then a bite of salad for crunchy contrast, then a refreshing sip of soup. The mouthful-by-mouthful decisions are what make the meal so special. —Naomi Duguid



Before dawn, vendors arrange their wares by candlelight in Hsipaw, in Burma's Shan State.

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WHAT COULD SHE
POSSIBLY BE DOING?"**



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Good Medicine

"Have you tried Rock and Rye?" The question was posed to me not by a bartender, but by my teetotaling mother-in-law. When she was a girl, she recalled, the rock candy-sweetened rye whiskey was a cure for the sniffles. "My mother would spoon it into hot tea," she said.

Intrigued, I called on New York distiller and spirits historian Allen Katz, who, I discovered, has been working on his own version. It's difficult to pinpoint the sweet, citrusy cordial's exact origin, he explained, but by most accounts it was popularized in America's early saloons, where bartenders added rock candy, or rock candy syrup, to smooth out the spicy bite of a young rye.

How did this barroom staple end up in the medicine cabinet? Apparently, around the turn of the 20th century, makers of Rock and Rye blurred the line between remedy and refreshment. Bottled versions made by Charles Jacquin et Cie (in production since 1884, the only pre-Prohibition survivor), Tolu, Arrow, Koch's, and Rocko-Ryo were often patented as "alcoholic medicinal preparations." This way, producers could skirt disapproval from the temperance movement while avoiding the higher taxes placed on liquor.

After Prohibition, bartenders resumed making

their own. The best-known was Harry Craddock's, from the 1930 Savoy Cocktail Book, which simply called for dosing whiskey with rock candy and lemon. In recent years, barkeeps have even started adding it to cocktails. In San Francisco, Rye bar's version, made with citrus peels and cloves, spiced up an old-fashioned. Star anise and horehound in the Rock and Rye at The Whistler in Chicago give the bar's hot toddy an herbal kick.

Now, even the bottled cordial is seeing an update. Mister Katz's Rock and Rye, made with rock candy, sour cherries, and a young rye whiskey from New York distillery company, is set for release in 2013. Hochstadter's Slow and Low, already on the market, infuses a 98-proof, six-year-old rye with citrus peels, rock candy, honey, and horehound for a spicy-sweet cordial. Spooned into tea or sipped straight, it's almost worth getting the sniffles for. —Kara Newman

HOW TO MAKE Stir together 1 liter rye whiskey, 8 oz. rock candy, 4 oz. Luxardo cherry syrup, 12 whole cloves, 3 whole star anise, 3 sticks cinnamon, 1 orange, thinly sliced, and 1 lemon, thinly sliced, in a 4-qt. glass jar with a lid. Let steep at room temperature for 2 days or up to a month.



Made with six-year-old rye and bottled at 98 proof, Hochstadter's Slow and Low (\$30) will appeal to rye lovers. The spirit's spicy bite is barely softened by rock candy sweetness, citrus peel, and herbal horehound.



The amber color of Jacquin's Rock and Rye (\$13) speaks to the cordial's rye whiskey roots, but one sip and it's clear that this is a liqueur. Note the orange slices and whole grapes bobbing in the bottle. —K.N.



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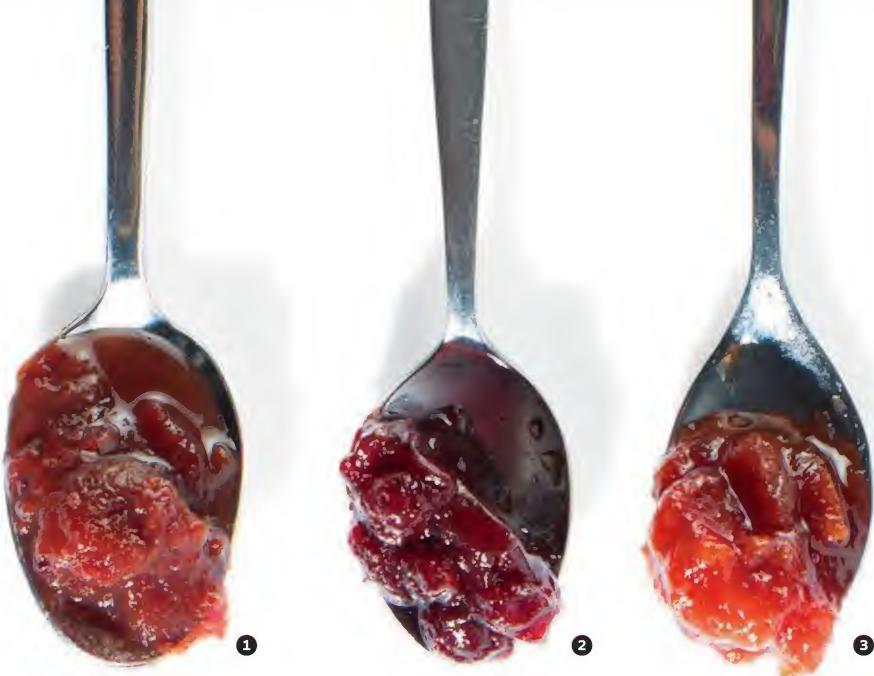


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5 To Try

Sweet, Tart

Five great cranberry sauces

1 Confituras Cranberry Cinnamon Jam (confituras.net) Bright Valencia oranges and Mexican cinnamon warm the tart berries in this Texan jam. Finely chopped cranberries produce a smooth consistency that's as appealing on dinner rolls as it is over turkey and stuffing.

2 Wilkin & Sons Ltd. Tiptree Organic Wild Cranberry Sauce (tiptree.com) Wild cranberries are reduced to a familiar, thick consistency in this quintessential holiday sauce,

which has been made in Tiptree, England, since 1885. You'll want this one with the leftovers.

3 Anarchy in a Jar Tipsy Quince & Cranberry Chutney (anarchyinajar.com) Brooklyn jam maker Laena McCarthy plays soft, buttery texture off spiky acidity and alcoholic bite with her quince cranberry chutney, which unites two notoriously sour fruits with smoky-sweet whiskey-soaked raisins. The full-flavored result is great smeared on turkey sandwiches.

4 Saucy by Nature Cranberry Pear Sauce (saucybynature.com) Flecks of juicy pear and a dose of carda-

mom mellow slow-simmered cranberries in this micro-batch sauce, which is made mostly from local ingredients. Try it as a glaze for poultry or game birds, such as duck.

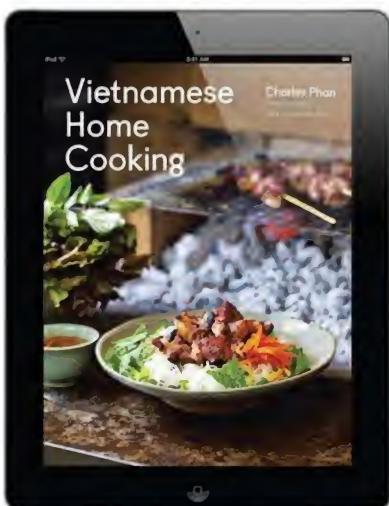
5 HeathGlen Cranberry Port Wine and Sage Chutney (651/464-5290; heathglen.com) This Minnesota-made chutney gets its savory edge from the addition of tawny port, sautéed onions, rosemary, and sage. It lends unexpected depth to turkey, and makes a fine component on a cheese plate.

THE PANTRY, page 92:
Info on buying whiskeys for Rock and Rye, cranberry sauces, and more



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Digital Feast: Our Monthly Selection of Great Ebooks

Phan Club Twenty years is a long time for a chef to wait between opening his flagship restaurant and publishing his first cookbook, but it's been nearly that long for Charles Phan. He debuted his San Francisco modern Vietnamese eatery, The Slanted Door, in 1995, and this fall brings us *Vietnamese Home Cooking* (Ten Speed Press, 2012), his clear-eyed take on his homeland's flavors. Phan devotes much of the book to technique, with expansive, recipe-driven chapters on steaming, braising, stir-frying, and grilling. The book is eye-catching in print, but in the digital version from the iBookstore, it's exquisite: a vibrant photo of *bún cuộn* (rice crepes with pork and mushrooms) fills the display; a swipe of the finger replaces it with a gallery of step-by-step imagery for constructing the dish, all cross-referenced against a visual glossary of ingredients. The book was a long time in the making, but as the saying goes, good things come to those who wait. (For more iBookstore picks, visit Saveur.com/Digitalfeast.) —Helen Rosner

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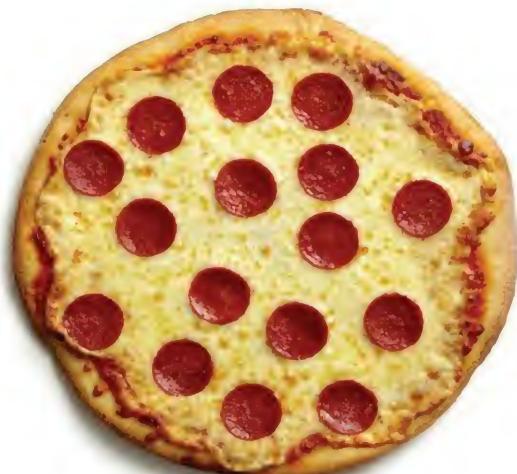
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CELLAR



37 Great American Wines

Nowadays, our favorite bottles don't only come from the West Coast

BY BETSY ANDREWS

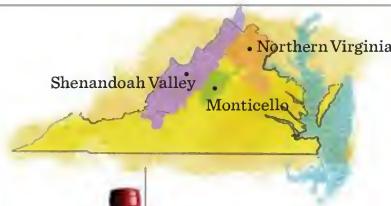
American wine is coming of age, far beyond Napa Valley. A few decades ago most vineyards outside California, Washington, and Oregon grew hardy but undistinguished native grapes and hybrids, but today *Vitis vinifera*, the European species that is the standard for serious winemaking, has taken hold across the country. Wine is made in all fifty states, but a few regions are revealing themselves to be extraordinarily well suited to specific *vinifera* varieties. In New York's Finger Lakes, at Hermann J. Wiemer Vineyard, the vine nursery—a barn full of infant plants blanketed in peat moss—feels like an incubator for the future of American wine. "In early March, vines go to North Carolina and Texas, and we release some to coastal Virginia," says Wiemer winemaker and viticulturalist Fred Merwarth. "Virginia is planting like crazy, Pennsylvania is planting like crazy. Ohio, Michigan, Missouri..." Merwarth's nursery clients number upwards of 1,500; less than two percent of them are located on the West Coast. Traveling to the wineries in up-and-coming regions is a fascinating way to experience the wide-ranging beauty of the American landscape. Even without leaving home, you can taste the different terrains, the particulars of soil and weather, in the wines themselves. On the following pages are some of our favorite bottles (in current vintages) from the best emerging regions—every one an apt choice for the Thanksgiving table and a tribute to America the beautiful.

A few outstanding bottles featured on the following pages, from left: Hermann J. Wiemer Dry Reserve Riesling 2010 (see page 36), Barboursville Octagon 2008 (page 30), Anthony Nappa Anomaly 2011 (page 34), and Sandstone Cellars VII 2009 (page 32).



Virginia Mountains

The story of *vinifera* in Virginia begins—and, for a couple of centuries, ends—with Thomas Jefferson. A Francophilic wine buff, the third president planted imported vines that failed, blighted by the parasite phylloxera. Contemporary winemakers have been more successful, while retaining Jefferson's Continental bent. Indeed, it's surprising how many Europeans you meet at wineries in the Piedmont and other mountainous Virginia areas—until you check the weather report. "The difference between a good and a great year in Bordeaux is when and how much rain comes," says Jay Youmans, head judge of the Virginia Governor's Cup wine competition. "Bringing over Europeans with experience with those conditions makes a lot of sense." Where 30 years ago, red wines here had a vegetal quality, today trellising and other methods that help grapes ripen and inhibit mildew have resulted, in particular, in polished, food-friendly Bordeaux-style blends.



① RdV Lost Mountain 2009 (\$88) The celebrated new kid on the block, this Northern Virginia winery has worked with a consultant from L'Université de Bordeaux to create stunning blends in the manner of that French region. This intense cabernet sauvignon-driven red smacks of liquorice and ruby port; it would be dynamite with a steak au poivre.

② Trump Monticello Rosé 2011 (\$14) A blend of cabernet sauvignon, cabernet franc, and merlot goes into this crisp, minerally rosé. An aroma of fallen leaves and underbrush along with a Bing-cherry, slightly floral flavor makes it a lovely bottle for Thanksgiving; it can pair successfully with the turkey and fixings as

well as the pumpkin pie that follows.

③ Potomac Point Richland Reserve Heritage 2009 (\$29) The winemaker is Italian, but the blend (nearly half merlot, with cabernet franc, cabernet sauvignon, and petit verdot) is all Bordeaux in this soulful red from the banks of the Potomac. Its bacony, meaty character makes it a great wine for barbecued meats.

④ Barbourville Malvaxia Passito 2007 (\$32) Modern Virginia winemaking started here in 1976 when an Italian wine scion, Gianni Zonin, established a vineyard (and, later, an inn) on an estate graced with the picturesque ruins of a Jefferson-designed stately home. This lush des-

sert wine is made with a white Mediterranean variety that is air-dried for four months to concentrate its richness. It tastes deliriously of ripe apricots.

⑤ Bluestone Cabernet Sauvignon 2010 (\$30) From the Shenandoah Valley on Virginia's western border comes this beautiful cabernet, whose character is in perfect poise between bright acidity and dark, oaky tannins; between velvety, stewed-fruit flavors and smoky spice. It would be wonderful with a slow-cooked winter stew, especially if you save a few sips to enjoy with a chocolate dessert.

⑥ Barbourville Octagon 2008 (\$50) Perhaps Virginia's most prominent bottle,

Barbourville's flagship wine deserves the attention it gets. A big but balanced Bordeaux blend in which the cabernet sauvignon really stands out, it's full of the energetic black fruit, chocolate, and coffee notes that pair so well with beef.

⑦ White Hall Gewürztraminer 2011 (\$20) Though it might surprise wine drinkers who think of gewürztraminer as a cold-climate grape, the aromatic white variety does well in temperate Virginia. This Charlottesville-area winery blends in petit manseng to lift the wine's acidity. It's less flinty than Alsatian-style gewürztraminers, but more versatile: Its subtle, lychee-flower sweetness and hints of sage and spice make it a match for many

dishes on the Thanksgiving table.

⑧ King Family Meritage 2010 (\$28) Having worked throughout his native France, winemaker Matthieu Finot makes Meritage, one of Virginia's signature Bordeaux-style blends, with an experienced hand. It shows in the bright, red berry flavors, toasted vanilla tannins, and delightful barnyard funk of this lithe red.

⑨ Ankida Ridge Pinot Noir 2010 (\$35) It's a tough grape to grow under wet conditions, but this vineyard pulls it off, creating a light-bodied pinot noir that strikes a balance between jammy California fruit and earthy Burgundian flavor. It's a great wine for pork.



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Texas Hills and Plains

No wonder it's the fifth-largest grape-growing state (after the West Coast states and New York); there's so much land in Texas that its two biggest wine regions—the Hill Country and the High Plains—total a whopping 17 million acres. Still, only a fraction of that area is planted; though Texas wine was well-established in the early 1900s, the vines that settlers brought were abandoned during Prohibition. In 1976, when winemaking resumed, the grapes planted were those in vogue: cabernet, merlot, chardonnay. None of them made great wine here. For that, you need desert-friendly grapes that like heat, drought, and sandy soil. "It's taken awhile, but in the last ten years they've started planting syrah, mourvèdre, tannat, vermentino, all the white Rhône varieties, and Spanish varieties like tempranillo, all of which are much better adapted to the climate," says Texas native and Master of Wine Christy Canterbury. "And the wines show it."

1 McPherson Les Copains 2011 (\$14) Dr. Clinton A. "Doc" McPherson founded Texas's first post-Prohibition winery in 1976. Today, his son Kim is the state's most influential producer. At his High Plains winery, he makes this light, herbaceous Rhône-style white blend. It resembles pink grapefruit in both its slightly blushing hue and its zesty, citrus-laced acidity. It's a great wine for a warm day.

2 Sandstone Cellars VII 2009 (\$30) From a boutique winery attached to a taqueria in the small Hill Country town of Mason, this bone-dry but racy red is made with 100 percent touriga nacional grapes, a primary variety used in Portugal to make port. It's spicy, smoky, and savory, with notes

of fennel and dusty road. What better to pair it with than carne asada tacos?

3 CapRock Roussane 2010 (\$18) A white Rhône grape variety with a distinctly herbal aroma, roussane is gaining ground in Texas. Using fruit grown on the High Plains, where hot days and cool nights help grapes develop acidity, this is a savory wine, with hints of dried rose and verbena, a pleasing touch of bitterness, and a lush body. It's good for grilled fish as well as the holiday bird.

4 McPherson La Herencia 2010 (\$14) Like a velvet glove on a clenched hand, this tempranillo-based blend has a smooth, gorgeous mouth-feel that finishes with tannic grip. Its

cranberry-orange flavor is perfect for Thanksgiving.

5 Messina Hof Private Reserve Primitivo 2011 (\$22) Bronx-born Italian-American winemaker Paul Bonarriago founded Messina Hof in 1977, the third of Texas's modern-day wineries. This juicy, fruity red, made with Italy's primitivo grape (identical to California's zinfandel), is accented with tobacco, liquorice, and mesquite. It's an awesome wine for Texas ribs.

6 Pedernales Reserve Tempranillo 2010 (\$30) From a small but excellent family-run winery in Texas Hill Country, this Spanish varietal (Pedernales' flagship wine) opens with a gloriously funky, earthy aroma. It tastes of mixed

berries and cake spices, with an easy acidity that makes you want another sip. Also try the Pedernales GSM, a smoky, juicy Rhône blend.

7 Duchman Family Trebbiano 2010 (\$13) This Hill Country expert in Italian varietals makes an aglianico that tastes of dates and cinnamon, along with other rich reds. But this refreshing white shows the winery's lighter side. With just a touch of tropical fruit flavor, it's so crisp and clean that it's almost thirst-quenching. Begin Thanksgiving dinner with this and a dozen raw oysters.

8 Brennan Buffalo Roam 2010 (\$16) Smelling deliciously of brown sugar, vanilla, and a just a bit of

fertile earth, this Rhône-style red develops both ripe red fruit and savory beef jerky flavors on the palate. If you're serving wild turkey or another game bird for the holiday meal, this is the wine to drink.

9 Llano Estacado Viviano 2008 (\$35) From the High Plains winery that Doc McPherson and his partner Bob Reed started back in the mid-1970s, this predominantly cabernet sauvignon-sangiovese blend tastes bigger than its 12.7 percent alcohol. With an herbaceous funk to its nose, strong tannins, and an austere minerality, it starts off as serious as Gary Cooper in *High Noon*. But its dark fruit opens up in the glass, and then it's delicious with a porterhouse steak.



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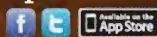
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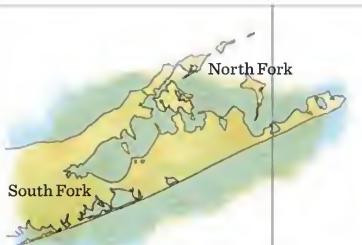
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Long Island, New York

There are hail, humidity, and hurricanes in bad years—not to mention fruit-loving deer and birds. And then there's the high cost of land in New York City's summer playground. But since 1973, when cookbook authors Louisa and Alex Hargrave planted Long Island's first *vinifera* vines, vineyards have spread across local farmland where once potatoes and other crops grew. The wines, from crisp chenin blanc to assertive reds, share a regional style. "It's not earth-driven, rustic, Old World, and it's not the fruit bombs of the West Coast. We're in between," says Mike Mraz, whose North Fork Table and Inn offers many Long Island bottles. "Balance is a hallmark." Jutting eastward into the Atlantic, the Island's North and South Forks, where the vineyards are, benefit from sea breezes that keep temperatures moderate, protecting grapes from late frost and overripening. What results are fresh, zingy wines that go great with seafood and other light dishes.



❶ Bedell Musée 2008 (\$75) Thirty-year-old vines—some of Long Island's most mature—yield the robust grapes for this broad-shouldered merlot-based blend. With oaky tannins and rich fruit, it's one of the Island's biggest wines, but it's not flabby: Dark currant and coffee flavors hang on a briny mineral frame. Try it with steak, or put it away to mellow with age.

❷ Shinn Cabernet Franc 2009 (\$29) Exhibiting none of the green pepper flavors that can mar cabernet franc, this light but lush red with spiced orange and cherry notes is a perfect partner for duck. If you can find any of the lauded 2007 vintage, try that too; it's a more complex wine from Long Island's best year in recent memory.

❸ Wölffer "Perle" Chardonnay 2010 (\$30) This fragrant, food-friendly chardonnay comes from a winery set in a grand Tuscan-style château amid vineyards on a former Hamptons potato field. Its vivacious acidity and touch of pleasing funkiness balanced by tropical fruit and maple candy flavors would go well with salmon in cream sauce, or another rich fish dish.

❹ Paumanok Chenin Blanc 2011 (\$25) A family-run winery in rustic digs at the base of the North Fork produces this wonderful aperitif wine. A powdery, dried apricot aroma yields to Meyer lemon and melon flavors, which, in turn, resolve in a brisk minerality. It's on the other end of the spectrum

but equally as good as Paumanok's smoky, chocolatey red blend, Assemblage.

❺ Channing Daughters Lagrein 2010 (\$30) From Long Island's true experimentalist winemaker comes a rare varietal from the Alto Adige, in northeastern Italy. This red exhibits earthy, spicy personality, and a fine balance between chewy tannins and luscious blackberry fruit. Also try their funky blaufränkisch, and Envelope, their chardonnay-gewürztraminer-malvasia bianca blend, filled with apricot and orange peel flavors.

❻ Anthony Nappa Anomaly 2011 (\$20) Though pinot noir shows promise on Long Island (look for bottles from McCall Wines), it is not widely grown because it's

prone to rot. Veteran Long Island winemaker Anthony Nappa sources grapes from throughout New York State for this "white" pinot noir, made by separating the grape juice from its dark red skins early in fermentation. It tastes like tart strawberries wrapped in flowers.

❼ Macari Block E Viognier 2009; 375 ml. (\$40) In colder climates, ice wine is made with grapes frozen on the vine. This knockout rendition comes from grapes that are harvested and then put into cold storage for three months so that the water in them freezes, concentrating the sweet, rich solids in the grape must that is pressed from the fruit. The resulting dessert wine is full of bright, grilled pineapple, mango, and

honey notes.

❽ Palmer Albariño 2011; 500 ml. (\$25) Winemaker Miguel Martin plants just a bit of this white variety from his native Spain and sells it in half-liter bottles. Would that there were more of it: Peachy, floral, and easygoing with a lovely crispness, it's the perfect match for Long Island clams.

❾ Lenz Cuvée 2006 (\$30) A pioneer winery of the North Fork, Lenz subjects 100 percent pinot noir grapes to traditional French champagne-making methods to produce a sparkling wine that tastes like it could have come from Épernay. It's nice and elegant, with soft, small, persistent bubbles that make it perfect for a sophisticated celebratory meal.

Discover Chile

From its luxurious city life to its reputable wine country



There's perhaps no sight more stunning than the modernity of Santiago's skyline against the backdrop of ancient mountains—the Andes on one side and the Coastal Mountains on the other. And visitors to this stunning capital city will find this contrast in every nook and cranny.

A popular city break is the Colchagua Wine Route (Ruta del Vino), family-owned wineries, the majority of which are in the central valley and easy to access by car.

Start downtown where you'll find the heart of historic Santiago and its key attractions. The Plaza de Armas is a gracious Colonial Baroque plaza lined with palm trees and some of the oldest architecture in the city. But come here to get a sense of grandeur and modern day Chileans as this is both a meeting place and a crossroads, making for excellent people-watching. Pop up to Cerro Santa Lucia, the grassy hill named for the day Pedro de Valdivia founded the city. It's a work of living architecture and history itself with its winding stairs, fountains, sculptures and monuments. From here, you'll have a view of Santiago from the inside looking out.

Two neighborhoods best show Santiago as a city of contrast, both artistic and elegant—Providencia and Barrio Bellavista.

Providencia is a shopper's paradise with a range of choices from shopping centers (very popular in South America) to designer boutiques. Barrio Bellavista is a bohemian mosaic of cafes, known for its nightclubs and art galleries amid historic homes (Pablo Neruda lived here).

Take the Teleférico, the gondola that stretches to the top of San Cristobol Hill for the outside-looking-in view of the city.

A popular city break is the Colchagua Wine Route (Ruta del Vino), family-owned wineries, the majority of which are in the central valley and easy to access by car. This route is one of Chile's best-known regions for premium red varieties. Here you'll taste world-class Cabernet and Syrah, which have European pedigrees, and Carmenere, Chile's "lost grape," which has been rediscovered and is touted as the country's response to Malbec.

For more information on Chile's capital and wine regions visit » www.chile.travel





New York Finger Lakes

Sometimes a grape does so well in a place that it becomes synonymous with the region. That was the case with California cabernet sauvignon, and it's also true of Finger Lakes riesling. As in Germany's Mosel Valley, where much of this German grape is grown, the sloping vineyards along the paw-like reach of the deep, glacial Finger Lakes are graced with moderate, drying breezes generated by the water's convection. The cool—not cold—climate favors riesling and Northern European grapes. Not only that, but as Thomas Pastuszak, the wine director at NoMad in Manhattan who studied and worked in the region, explains, "The last Ice Age brought incredible minerals, leaving microterroirs that don't exist elsewhere in the U.S. The soil complexity resembles the great regions of Europe." Versatile and aromatically expressive, riesling is the perfect grape for such soil, says Pastuszak, because it can "speak of where it's coming from."



❶ Hermann J. Wiemer Dry Reserve Riesling 2010 (\$29) A benchmark for great Finger Lakes riesling, this best-of-the-harvest bottling comes from an all-natural winery founded by a scion of a Mosel Valley winemaking family. Long-fermented to maximize complexity, it starts with a swoon-worthy floral nose, then hits your mouth with lusciousness, bringing apricot, Mandarin orange, and herbal flavors that last long after each sip.

❷ Red Newt "Curry Creek Vineyards" Gewürztraminer 2008 (\$38) From a winery attached to a popular local restaurant, this charismatic Alpine-style white wine has a sweet, lychee-like aroma and tastes flowery and fruity until mouthwatering acid and racy, addictive

spice sneak up on you. It's a great wine for Thai food.

❸ Chateau Frank Blanc de Noirs 2006 (\$30) From the pioneer Finger Lakes winery, founded in 1962 by Ukrainian immigrant Dr. Konstantin Frank, this 100 percent pinot noir sparkler, made in traditional champagne fashion, has a wonderfully bready aroma, a plummy acidity, firm drying tannins, and a fine bubble that cleanses the mouth. It's a festive wine.

❹ Bloomer Creek "Tanzendame" Dry Riesling 2010 (\$33) An innovative startup vineyard on Seneca Lake makes this long-fermented dry riesling with yeasts found naturally in the surrounding air. The result is a wine so intense, it almost tastes fortified, with

gorgeous cassis and tart strawberry jam notes.

❺ Fox Run Lemberger 2009 (\$18) A black-skinned red wine grape grown in Germany and Hungary as well as in Austria, where it's called blafränkisch, leberberger is growing in popularity in cooler U.S. wine regions. This light red's distinctly hemp-like aroma yields to a ripe berry flavor dressed in vanilla and black pepper. It's lovely with fall venison.

❻ Ravines Cabernet Franc 2010 (\$19) Following a rich nose, some bright, tangy cherry flavors meet exotic spices—cardamom, star anise—in this medium-bodied, softly tannic red that would be a perfect match for North African-style spiced lamb dishes.

❼ Lamoreaux Landing "Yellow Dog Vineyard" Riesling 2010 (\$20) Micro-terroir really shines in this dry riesling. Grapes from a single, wind-swept vineyard planted in gravelly soil on top of shale rock show off their bright minerality with sweet-tart nectarine flavors and just a bit of the steel note found in many Austrian rieslings.

❽ Heart & Hands Dry Riesling 2011 (\$23) From a tiny, young winery on the eastern shore of Lake Cayuga, this riesling tastes on the sweeter side of dry. Its lovely floral nose resolves into a spicy and herbal palate. It's a turkey wine for those who enjoy a glass with a gentler touch. This maker's pinot noirs are also worth seeking out.

❾ Anthony Road "Martini Reinhardt Selection" Riesling 2009 (\$30) Dusky potpourri-like rose aromas lead to honeyed citrus and stone fruit flavors, with a terrific acidity that keeps this sweet riesling in balance and makes it a perfect complement to dessert.

❿ Red Tail Ridge Pinot Noir 2010 (\$20) When Nancy Irelan, former head of research for the world's largest winemaker, Gallo, left her job, she came to the Finger Lakes, where she is making fascinating reds. Her passion for pinot noir shows in this bright, spicy bottle full of red berries, with anchoring earth notes. It's another great Thanksgiving wine. Also try her lambrusco-like sparkling teroldego and mulberry-rich dornfelder.

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Jam Session

A French chef makes fruit preserves a cult favorite

BY GABRIELLA GERSHENSON

There's a certain category of foodstuff that can turn otherwise sane travelers into rabid hoarders. It might be a bootleg sausage or a contraband raw-milk cheese—so long as it's extremely delicious, and rare enough that you can't get more of it back home. Until recently, the jams of the Alsatian pastry chef Christine Ferber, which were effectively impossible to procure in the United States, fell into this category. I only knew of them through jet-setter friends who would return from France with suitcases full of carefully wrapped jars that they'd scored at the Bon Marché, Paris's chicest department store. When I asked them what the fuss was about, they would rhapsodize about "custardy" apricot–vanilla jam, and raspberry–violet preserves that were like "puréed flowers and fruit." I was intrigued.

So when I learned that Ferber's jams are now available throughout the United States from an online retailer, I promptly ordered a half-dozen jars, eager to finally give them a try. They were everything I had hoped for and more. Caramel–apple (*pommes d'Alsace et caramel*), a confit of julienned fruit in amber jelly, transformed a slice of wheat toast into apple pie. The meltingly soft berries in the strawberry (*fraises d'Alsace*) jam, eaten right off the spoon, tasted luscious and rich, as though they'd been poached in butter. A Christmas jam (*confiture de Noël*) mingled a bevy of dried fruits, almonds, and walnuts with spices such as cardamom and star anise in a confection that would be at home on a cheese plate. And whole sour cherries (*griottes d'Alsace*), with savory notes of wine, vinegar, and bitter almond, called out to be served as a condiment for meats and poultry.

I discovered that Ferber achieves these nuanced results by personally attending to each jar of jam that bears her name. She is up at 5:30 A.M. six days a week, canning preserves at her family's pâtisserie, Maison Ferber, in the tiny Alsatian village of Niedermorschwihr. For an operation of this reputation and scope, her methods are almost unheard of. While Ferber makes hundreds of thousands of jars of jam in close to 200 varieties each year (including collaborations with such chefs as Pierre Hermé and Alain Ducasse), the fourth-generation pastry chef mostly uses fruits from nearby orchards, woods, and farms, on the same day that they have been picked. She works in small batches—no more than eight pounds of produce at a time—always in a shallow copper pot, cooking gently to preserve the fruit's color and texture.

The end products are sublime. Indeed, Ferber's jams are so special that they make wonderful gifts—though it's still difficult to resist hoarding them for oneself. A 220-gram jar costs \$18, plus shipping. To order, visit thesweetpalate.com.

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MEMORIES



Just Us Cooks

In Nana's kitchen, cooking meant belonging, and the meatballs were second to none

BY ALEX WITCHEL

MY FATHER'S MOTHER, NANA, was the greatest cook in the family, so my mother was at a disadvantage from the start. No matter how well she did—the crêpes for her cheese blintzes alone were a work of art—Dad preferred Nana's cooking. It was never a fair match, and most of the time Mom didn't even try to compete. When Nana made gefilte fish, she started with live carp in the bathtub. Mom started—and ended—with a jar from the supermarket.

Nana, a tall, imposing woman, would take me firmly in hand as she strode, unafraid, into the squawking, stinking live poultry market that was still in existence in Passaic, New Jersey. Born and raised in Bialystok, which was Russia before World War I and Poland after it, Nana had a facility for languages—she could speak seven of them. This came in handy for her job, working in a store selling women's coats to Russians, Poles, and Germans. After she married the man who brought her to Passaic, they opened a produce shop there. Not particularly glamorous, but she managed to cultivate her many interests. She was a lifelong opera fan; I listened to WQXR with her every Saturday afternoon, to the Texaco-sponsored live broadcasts from the Met. In her younger years, the Yiddish theater was still vibrant, and she loved going to it on Second Avenue. When it waned, she took to Broadway. She also loved the movies, anything with Bette Davis or Barbara Stanwyck, strong women.

It just so happened that my mother had been named for Barbara Stanwyck. And in my mother, as in those cinematic heroines, Nana saw the possibility for a life and career she never dreamed of for herself. My mother's own mother was dumbfounded when she decided to pursue her doctorate in education, a rarity for a woman of her generation. What did a woman need that for when she was already married, with small children? Nana, however, not only championed my mother's ambitions,

From top: The author as an infant with her grandmother, Rose Witchel, left, and her mother, Barbara Witchel, in 1957; sweet and sour potted meatballs (see page 42 for a recipe).

FROM TOP: COURTESY ALEX WITCHEL; TODD COLEMAN

but made it possible for her to fulfill them. If she, for all her intelligence, had to settle for selling coats and cucumbers, the most constructive thing she could do would be to help her serious daughter-in-law earn the highest academic degree possible. So every weekend, for years, my father dropped my brother and me at her house so Mom could work toward her degree uninterrupted.

I spent hours watching Nana cook, and she always found a task for me. When she made chopped liver, she would screw a cast-iron grinder onto the edge of the kitchen table and let me turn the handle as she fed the livers into it. Later, we would sit in her living room in front of a small black-and-white TV to watch Julia Child. Just us cooks.

She made wonderful potted meatballs in sweet and sour sauce. She served them with rice on the side, never spaghetti, and you could break up the very large meatballs and mix them into the rice with the sauce.

Nana's brother, Coduk, also loved those meatballs. Coduk (pronounced SUH-duk) was actually famous in family lore for an inauspicious reason: He wasn't smart. In a Jewish family besotted with education, being a *dummkopf* was a *shanda*, which in Yiddish means shame. Coduk was, however, a gifted tailor, and worked at Chipps, a men's clothing store where he was known as the trouser man. He was also something of a ladies' man—he had quite a beautiful wife—and a legendary dancer. "In his hands and his feet, he's a genius," Dad and Nana would say.

I never had a conversation with Coduk—he spoke only Yiddish—but I do remember engaging him in some competitive

Nana's kitchen was a haven for me, a place where I learned the ballet of bending and stretching for the appropriate pots and platters

meatball eating when I was seven or eight. He was matching and raising me until Nana cut me off with, "Your eyes are bigger than your stomach," which carried the inglorious sting of truth. I watched as Coduk continued to eat. In contrast to my penchant for turning all food into baby food, breaking it down and mixing it together, he was an isolationist. He kept his meatballs separated from his rice, which in turn was separated from his spinach. He ate each item sequentially, starting with the meatballs. I couldn't understand the point of eating rice plain when there was sauce to be had. Maybe what they said about him was true.

On most nights at Nana's house, she and I would sit at the kitchen table together after dinner, she with a glass of tea and a sugar cube in her mouth, me with a glass of milk and a Tootsie Roll in mine, so each mouthful would taste like chocolate. Later, if I woke during the night and started to cry, missing my mother, she'd sit with me at the kitchen table with all the lights on, and boy was I sorry then. By that point she had taken her teeth out for the night. There they were, near the sink in

ALEX WITCHEL is a staff writer for The New York Times Magazine. This excerpt is reprinted by arrangement with Riverhead Books, a member of Penguin Group (USA) Inc., from All Gone © 2012 by Alex Witchel.

one of those glasses that used to be a Breakstone's sour cream container. Her face, which seemed like the one on Mount Rushmore to me, had lost half its heft. I was more afraid of that than the dark.

But in daylight at least, Nana's kitchen, like my mother's, was a haven for me, a place where I learned by osmosis. To this day, the ballet of bending and stretching for the appropriate pots or platters sets itself in motion, and all I need to do is follow along. Measure a cup of rice, notice how little is left, add it to the shopping list. Half watch, half listen to whatever news is on the small TV near the stove, while tapping out my spices in little multicolored heaps. Hear the water boiling for pasta without having to see it, smell when to turn down the heat under the onions. In my kitchen, where every gesture is small and distinct and insignificant to the world beyond my door, I am at peace. ↗

SWEET AND SOUR POTTED MEATBALLS

SERVES 4–6

The recipe for these potted meatballs is adapted from Arthur Schwartz's *Jewish Home Cooking: Yiddish Recipes Revisited* (Ten Speed Press, 2008).

For the sweet and sour sauce:

- 2 tbsps. canola oil
- 1 medium yellow onion, minced
- 1 15-oz. can tomato sauce
- ½ tsp. sour salt (see page 92), or the juice of 1 lemon (about 2 tbsps.)
- ¼ cup firmly packed dark brown sugar
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

For the meatballs:

- 2 lb. ground beef chuck
- 2 eggs, beaten
- ½ cup long-grain white rice, parboiled for 3 minutes
- 1 cup bread crumbs
- 1 medium yellow onion, grated on the coarse side of a box grater
- 2½ tsp. kosher salt
- ½ tsp. freshly ground black pepper

1 Prepare the sauce: In a large Dutch oven, heat the oil, then sauté the minced onion over medium heat until tender and golden, 8 to 10 minutes. Add the tomato sauce, and rinse out the can with ½ cup water to loosen any sauce that remains, adding that liquid to the pan. Stir in the sour salt or lemon juice and brown sugar. Bring to a simmer, uncovered, over medium heat. Remove from the heat and set aside.

2 Make the meatballs: Put the ground meat in a large bowl and push it to one side. Add the eggs, rice, bread crumbs, onion, salt, and pepper to the other side of the bowl and combine with a large fork. Work in the meat, handful by handful, until everything is thoroughly blended. Return the sauce to a gentle simmer over medium heat. Using a ½-cup measuring cup, shape meatballs measuring about 2½" and drop them gently into the sauce. You should have 10 to 12. Cover and simmer slowly for 30 minutes, gently rotating and pushing the meatballs around halfway through the cooking so that they are thoroughly coated in sauce after about 15 minutes. Correct seasoning with salt and pepper if necessary. Serve very hot.

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CLASSIC

Home Slice

Pumpkin pie is an American original

BY SANDRA L. OLIVER

EVERY AUTUMN, AROUND mid-September, I start to prowl the garden at my home in Maine, peeking under broad pumpkin leaves to count the fruit for future pies. By October, when my pumpkins, a variety aptly named new england pie, have grown to the size of cantaloupes, I harvest them. They're perfectly portioned, averaging one pie apiece. And so I begin to plot my Thanksgiving baking.

Pumpkin pie has always had a special place on my table. For me, a historian of early-American foods, it is the most authentic American dessert. Apple pie, despite the old saying, is British; it crossed the Atlantic with English settlers. It was only after they and their descendants—for whom the easy-to-grow native pumpkin proved a godsend through the hungriest years—adapted their old-world recipes to this new-world ingredient that custardy, spiced pumpkin pie as we know it today came to be.

The primary antecedents were the 18th-century British “puddings”—that is, custard mixed with mashed fruits or vegetables and baked in a pastry shell. In the 1747 book *The Art of Cookery*, the English writer Hannah Glasse provided instructions for making a “potato pudding” of regular or sweet potatoes, sherry or white wine, sugar, currants, eggs, and butter or cream. The small evolution from that dessert to one made with pumpkins first appeared in 1796, with a recipe for pumpkin pudding very similar to Glasse’s potato version in Amelia Simmons’s *American Cookery*, the first stateside cookbook.

That book also contained a recipe for pumpkin pudding that called for ginger, nutmeg, and mace, which soon took hold as pumpkin pie’s signature spices. By the mid-1800s, as Northeasterners migrated west, they took that dessert, which by then was called pie, with them. After 1863, when Thanksgiving was declared an official holiday and many of its customs were codified, the association of



pumpkin with early settlers made the pie a de rigueur holiday dessert.

For much of the last century, the making of a Thanksgiving pumpkin pie has begun with opening a can of Libby’s; that 144-year-old Chicago-based company cans close to 50,000 tons of pumpkin every year. Say what you will about canned pumpkin, it has proven to be very good for the survival of pumpkin pie as the iconic Thanksgiving dessert. During the past decade or so, however, the proliferation of farmers’ markets has made all sorts of cooking pumpkin available across the United States. The ones used by New England settlers and those grown today are all *Cucurbita*, a genus of the gourd. Many of the pumpkins used for baking come under the species *Cucurbita moschata*, which includes low-moisture, creamy-fleshed varieties such as the neck pumpkin and the dickinson field pumpkin (the one that’s typically canned), and even the butternut squash. Bake a pie using a jack-o’-lantern variety like magic lantern or appalachian, though, and the result will be a filling that’s fibrous and vegetal.

Whatever kind of fresh pumpkin you choose, you’ll need to roast or steam the flesh first, and be sure to drain it before mashing and combining with the other ingredients, as excess moisture can cause the custard to separate during baking. Sometimes I substitute evaporated milk for cream in the filling because it makes for an especially luscious texture. After all, if Thanksgiving celebrates anything, it’s that those early lean times are over.

Roasted Pumpkin Pie

SERVES 8–10

To make the purée for this recipe, peel the pumpkin or squash (see “Pumpkin Picking” on page 88 for the best types to use), cut into 1” cubes, roast at 400° until tender, about 30 minutes, then mash.

- 1½ cups flour
- 7 tbsp. unsalted butter, cubed and chilled
- 1 tsp. kosher salt
- 2 cups puréed, roasted pumpkin or squash
- 1½ cups evaporated milk
- ½ cup packed light brown sugar
- 1 tbsp. cornstarch
- 2 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 2 tsp. ground ginger
- ½ tsp. freshly grated nutmeg
- 2 eggs

1 Using your fingers, rub flour, butter, and ½ tsp. salt together in a bowl until pea-size crumbles form. Add ¼ cup ice-cold water; stir until dough forms. Form into a disk; wrap and chill for 1 hour. Meanwhile, whisk together remaining salt, pumpkin, milk, sugar, cornstarch, cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg, and eggs in a bowl until smooth; set aside.

2 Heat oven to 375°. Using a rolling pin, roll dough to ¼” thickness. Transfer to a 9” pie dish, and trim excess dough from edges; crimp with a fork or your fingers, if you like. Pour filling into crust; bake until the middle jiggles slightly when the pie dish is tapped, about 45 minutes. Let cool to room temperature before serving.

SANDRA L. OLIVER is the author of *Maine Home Cooking* (Down East Books, 2012).

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SWEETS—ARE ALIVE AND WELL IN PARIS

By Jay Cheshes Photographs by Landon Nordeman

Facing page: A cook at Le Timgad, a Moroccan restaurant in Paris, holds a platter of chicken tagine (see page 57 for a recipe).



TIMGAD

IN MY MEMORY, Paris and couscous have always been inextricably linked. I attribute this to one of the most mythic meals of my youth, a lunch that lasted six hours. It was the early 1980s and I was living in Paris, an expatriate kid with a diplomat dad. We were a big group, occupying a long table at a Moroccan restaurant not far from the Opéra. I'm not sure how the conversation, and the food, lasted so long. I can still hear my dad's barrel laugh as he recounted some story in Bronx-accented French.

Family friends from Morocco had pre-ordered the main course, *couscous royale*, which came to the table in stages on long silver platters. On one rose a golden slope of buttery grains. Another held hunks of spoon-tender carrots, turnips, zucchini, and celery. Chickpeas and white beans in broth arrived in wide bowls along with fiery red pepper harissa and caramelized onions mixed with plump golden raisins. Silver warming dishes awaited the meat—stewed chicken and lamb, merguez sausage, grilled lamb chops, and spicy beef meatballs. Those delicacies were brought out last, on immense platters and with great fanfare: sparklers protruded from the meat like porcupine quills, sending up plumes of sulfurous smoke. I reached for seconds and thirds as the hours and bottles of wine disappeared. I was hooked.

During the four years that we lived in the French capital, we returned frequently to Chez Bébert, the scene of that midday feast. It was hardly the most authentic Moroccan spot in Paris, but the restaurant—among the earliest to promote couscous to a non-immigrant clientele—was moderately priced and was so popular among middle-class Parisians that the owners soon opened additional branches. By the time my family and I moved back to the States, couscous symbolized Paris

as clearly in my mind as a buttery croissant.

It turns out the French shared my enthusiasm. In the decades since I left Paris, North Africa's best-known dish has become one of the most widely consumed foods in France. These days, even ordinary neighborhood bistrots often feature a couscous special one day of the week. Its popularity reflects the integration of North African culture in France, where I can now hear Algerian *raï* hip-hop on Top 40 stations, smell sweet smoke wafting from shisha bars that swarm with Parisian hipsters, and find upscale hammams, or Turkish baths, opening in posh neighborhoods.

I recently returned to Paris to immerse myself in the tastes of the Maghreb—as French-influenced Morocco, Tunisia, and Algeria are known—and to rekindle a romance with that region's food that started long ago. I learned, to my delight, that the Maghreb's diverse culinary repertoire is being expressed more fully than ever in Paris, and it includes far more than couscous.

EXPATS FROM THE MAGHREB—the name means “occident” in Arabic, and denotes the western edge of the Arab world—constitute the largest immigrant group in France. Those immigrants have been arriving in waves since the 1950s and '60s, when they began settling on the edges of Paris as the French colonial era came to a close. Even as second- and third-generation North Africans identify as French, new immigrants from the region continue to pour in, populating sections of the city that are as fragrant with spices and teeming with hijab-clad women as the Marrakech Kasbah.

While Tunisians and Algerians dominate the *maghrébin* enclaves, Moroccans run the majority of the most ambitious restaurants, upscale places with a bourgeois clientele. Morocco—as in vogue today among Europeans as it was in the '60s, when Yves Saint-Laurent unveiled his Moroccan-inspired couture—has a long history of catering to well-to-do visitors. That tradition of European-inflected (*continued on page 52*)



Facing page, clockwise from top left: Mansouria, chef Fatéma Hal's Moroccan restaurant in Paris; North African pantry staples at a shop near the Barbes-Rochechouart market; *mrouzia*, honey-braised lamb shanks at Mansouria (see page 57 for a recipe); a customer at El Andalousia, an Algerian pastry shop; *mahjouba*, Algerian crêpes (see page 56 for a recipe); artwork at Mansouria; an employee of El Andalousia; *les roses*, pastries filled with a paste of almonds, hazelnuts, and walnuts, at El Andalousia.



TO ME, COUSCOUS
REPRESENTED
PARIS AS FAITHFULLY
AS A BUTTERY
CROISSANT MIGHT





Under the elevated tracks of the Barbès-Rochechouart Metro is an outdoor market that caters to the *maghrébin* community.



(continued from page 48) hospitality took root firmly and enduringly in Paris.

Le Timgad, a Moroccan restaurant located not far from the Arc de Triomphe, has been serving couscous to a jacket-and-tie crowd from the same silver tureens, in a dining room with alabaster friezes and a gurgling fountain, since 1971.

"This place is frozen in time," offered a well-dressed regular sitting one table over from me at dinner one night, who was sipping from a glass of chilled house rosé. "It has a sumptuousness, a joie de vivre you don't find anymore, even in Morocco." A *kefta* tagine with tomatoes and olives featured delicate lamb meatballs topped with a soft-cooked egg. Le Timgad's *couscous princier* was several notches above the *royale* of my youth, with grains so fine and buttery they needed no sauce at all. Making couscous of the caliber I found at Chez Bébert and Le Timgad is labor-intensive, so different from the boxed variety most of us know. The semolina pasta is hand-rolled, rubbed with olive oil, steamed, then rubbed again between the fingers so each grain remains fluffy and distinct.

Though Morocco's cuisine is the Maghreb's most regal, with the most complex spice blends and elaborate dishes, you're not likely to find any food in that country dubbed *princier* or *royale*. These fancy presentations were Parisian innovations, intended to seduce the French palate. (In Morocco, couscous is traditionally served with only one meat, and just one day a week, usually after Friday prayers.) That point was driven home when I paid a visit to Le Mansouria, a venerated Moroccan restaurant in the 11th arrondissement. The owner, Fatéma Hal—a cookbook author and authority on Moroccan cuisine—offers *couscous royale* on the menu only grudgingly.

"In '84, when I opened, you didn't talk about Moroccan food," Hal told me. "You talked about cuisine orientale. As if there were no difference." Hal went on to tell me that she approached her first cookbook, published in 1995, like an ethnographer, interviewing Moroccan women and writing down the recipes they'd learned from their mothers. Many of these dishes showed up on Le Mansouria's menu. "Once the first book came out, people were willing to try something beyond what they knew," she said. Among the restaurant's many intriguing offerings is *mrouzia*, a ceremonial dish of caramelized lamb that dates to the 13th century and is rarely found in restaurants. The falling-off-the-bone meat is lacquered with honey, surrounded by almonds and raisins, and flavored with *ras el hanout*, a

spice mix that, at Mansouria, blends 27 spices. The lamb, like many authentic *maghrébin* dishes, is cooked in *smen*, fermented clarified butter that lends a mineral tang to the food.

SMEN, I discovered the following day, is readily available in the food markets of working-class Belleville, one of the most dynamic sections of town, home to North Africans, Turkish, Chinese, and Vietnamese immigrants, among others. I continued my *maghrébin* food crawl there, meeting up with Hal's son-in-law, a young Frenchman named Rénato Lolli. The plan—a foolish one in retrospect—was to start off the day with Algerian sweets.

More than a century of French rule in Algeria left a distinctive architectural legacy and a stubborn political mess, along with a weakness for crusty baguettes. It might also explain why Algerian pastries are as delicate as the finest *petits-fours*. La Bague de Kenza, just outside Belleville, is the city's best-known practitioner of *pâtisserie orientale*. I was mesmerized by the exquisite confections. Honey-soaked *d'ziriates*, filled with orange blossom-scented almonds, resembled the most intricate dim sum. There were pyramids of powdered sugar-dusted *cornes de gazelle* ("gazelle's horn"), trays full of baklava, and an entire section devoted to almond-paste sweets molded into the shapes of exotic fruits—Barbary figs, pumpkins, bananas—and flavored with jam. These are deceptively rich morsels, as we discovered while nibbling our way through an overly ambitious selection.

It was after noon when Lolli and I departed, leftover pastries in hand (dense with honey, a natural preservative, they have a shelf life of several weeks). Up the block we passed a cluttered shop selling sandals, clothing, Korans, and framed pictures of Mecca. In the window of a halal butcher I spied *saucissons* made with beef instead of the usual pork. Out front were crates of fresh mint for the tea sipped all day in Belleville's many male-only cafés. Around the corner, the shelves of a dry goods store were piled high with imported foods and dirt-cheap *couscoussiers* and tagines, the traditional

Clockwise from top left: A halal butcher at Boucherie du Vieux Alger; *samsa*, fried almond pastries (see page 57 for a recipe), at El Andalousia; servers at Le Timgad; *couscous royale* (see page 56 for a recipe); Restaurant La Perle, a *maghrébin* eatery in Paris; chef-owner Fatéma Hal holds court at her restaurant, Mansouria; lamb meatball and egg tagine at Le Timgad (see page 57 for a recipe); tagines and other dishes at Souk Maghnia, a shop for *maghrébin* provisions.





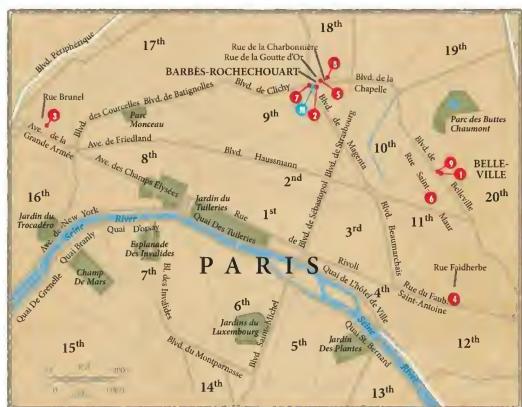
THE LAMB IS
LACQUERED WITH
HONEY, AND FLAVORED
WITH *RASEL HANOUT*,
A BLEND OF 27 SPICES



cooking vessels for the dishes that share their names. We passed a shop that sells only water pipes, then a hammam, and then a Tunisian bakery called Nani.

Peering through the bakery's window reminded me of long-forgotten early Sunday mornings when my family lived in Paris. Before the rest of us got up, my dad used to head out in search of Tunisian beignets. We'd awake to discover on the kitchen table orbs of fried dough as big as our cat—sweet, sticky, and drowning in honey. Nathan de Tunis, the Jewish Tunisian bakery that was the source of those treats, closed down years ago, but the cruller-like *boules de miel* of my youth are easy to find in *maghrébin* Belleville, as are dozens of Tunisian pastries, which tend to be more rustic than their Algerian counterparts. I couldn't resist buying a *boule de miel*; the huge, fluffy doughnuts remain as chin-drippingly good as I remember.

We turned up the Boulevard de Belleville,



the neighborhood's central thoroughfare. Toward one end of the street, you'd swear you were in Tunis or Algiers; toward the other, it was like being in Shanghai or Hanoi. We walked into the heart of the North African section, where Jewish businesses sit across the street from Muslim ones. On the Jewish side, we found a line of customers awaiting a quick lunch at a Tunisian hole-in-the-wall called Chez René et Gabin. "We're known in Miami, Los Angeles, Las Vegas," boasted the proprietress, manning the till.

The specialty at Chez René et Gabin is *casse-croûte tunisien* (*casse-croûte* translates loosely as “snack”), a crusty white roll filled with flaky canned tuna, sliced potato, *mechouia* (a tomato and pepper chutney), olives, hot peppers, capers, cucumber-and-tomato salad, preserved lemon, olive oil, and spicy harissa. It’s the country’s most beloved sandwich, and an incredibly satisfying two-handed lunch. Tunisia is blessed with bounteous Mediterra-

nean waters and thriving fisheries, and tuna is a favored ingredient in all kinds of dishes. At lunch counters like Chez René et Gabin, you'll also find the fish stuffed with an egg into samosa-like bundles made from *feuilles de malsouka*, Tunisian pastry leaves. The packets are flash-fried so that the exterior is golden and the egg is still runny inside.

A few days later, Lolli and I rendezvoused near the elevated Métro tracks at Barbès-Rochechouart. This gritty neighborhood at the base of Montmartre is among the least touristy spots in Paris, right next door to one of the most frequently visited ones. The outdoor market there is one of the liveliest and most reasonably priced in the city. The two of us entered the scrum, pushing our way past stalls selling artichokes, cardoons, fresh dates, squat zucchinis, olives, spices, even mouse traps. At Méditerranée Alimentation, an Algerian grocer across from the market, a woman in a purple head scarf stood before

We wandered around looking for a bakery, El Andalousia, that had been recommended to Lolli by an Algerian friend. We found it on the Rue de La Goutte d'Or. In a glass case inside the shop, I noticed bags filled with what looked like fresh angel hair pasta. The noodles, called *rechta*, are made with semolina and, like couscous, are usually steamed and served with stew. The noodles are traditionally eaten, the bakery's owner explained, in a dish that shares their name, at the start of the Islamic New Year—which it happened to be on the day of our visit. We left the shop armed with directions to a nearby restaurant that serves, we were assured, a very fine *rechta*.

Dar-el-Houma is a family affair, with Dad at the register, Mom in the kitchen, and their son waiting tables. As promised, their *rechta* was a revelation. The handmade noodles, as light and fluffy as the finest couscous, came topped with chicken, chickpeas, and turnips, all seasoned liberally with cinnamon. The humble restaurant, filled with Algerians, was a far cry from where my journey began, almost 30 years earlier, at that fancy six-hour lunch. But it was no less pleasurable, and just as quintessentially Parisian. 

The Tunisian tuna sandwich at Chez René et Gabin (see page 56 for a recipe).

A close-up photograph of a young man with dark hair and a warm smile. He is wearing a purple t-shirt and is holding a large sandwich filled with various toppings like lettuce, tomatoes, and meat, wrapped in white paper. The background is slightly blurred, showing an indoor setting.

Travel Guide Maghrébin Paris

Dinner for two with drinks and tip
Inexpensive Under \$20 Moderate \$20–\$80
Expensive Over \$80

WHERE TO EAT

➊ Chez René et Gabin

92 Boulevard de Belleville, 20th arrondissement (33/1/4358-7814). Inexpensive. The overstuffed tuna fish sandwich called *casse-croûte* is the specialty of this Jewish-Tunisian neighborhood joint.

➋ Dar-el-Houma

47 Boulevard de la Chapelle, 10th arrondissement (33/1/5692-1848). Inexpensive. Order the superb *rechta*, a holiday meal of noodles with chicken and turnips, at this homey Algerian restaurant.

➌ Le Timgad

21 Rue Brunel, 17th arrondissement (33/1/45/74-23-70, timgad.fr). Expensive. Since 1971, this posh Moroccan restaurant has been a draw for its exceptional renditions of couscous and tagines, served by waiters in black tie.

➍ Mansouria

11 Rue Faidherbe, 11th arrondissement (33/1/4371-0016, mansouria.fr). Moderate. Fatéma Hal's authentic Moroccan restaurant features many hard-to-find dishes based on recipes culled from research trips to her home country.

➎ Méditerranée Alimentation

30 Rue de la Charbonnière, 18th arrondissement (33/1/4262-6455). Inexpensive. This maghrébin grocery store on the edge of the Barbès-Rochechouart market offers fine Algerian crêpes called *mahjouba*, made to order.

WHAT TO DO

➏ La Baguette de Kenza

106 Rue Saint-Maur, 11th arrondissement (33/1/4314-9315, labaguekenza.free.fr). The most acclaimed Algerian bakery, with many Paris locations, specializes in honey-drenched confections that are as delicious as they are beautiful.

➐ Barbès-Rochechouart Market

18th arrondissement (no phone). Look for spices, olives, produce, fish, meat, and much more at this massive outdoor market, on Wednesdays and Saturdays under the Barbès-Rochechouart Métro.

➑ El Andalousia

25 Rue de la Goutte d'Or, 18th arrondissement (33/1/4251-1925). This little Algerian bakery is a destination for both sweet and savory treats, such as *les roses*, filo-dough blossoms filled with a paste of walnuts, hazelnuts, and almonds.

➒ Nani

102 Boulevard de Belleville, 20th arrondissement (33/1/4797-3805). This venerable kosher bakery, founded in 1962, specializes in honey-soaked *boules de miel* and other Tunisian pastries. —J.C.

Casse-Croûte Tunisien

(Tunisan Tuna Sandwich)

SERVES 4

Both hands are needed to eat this overstuffed tuna sandwich (pictured on page 54) lavished with fiery condiments and stacks of fixings, a North African take on a French *pan bagnat*.

- 3 tbsp. olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- ½ small yellow onion, minced
- ½ small green bell pepper, stemmed, seeded, and minced
- 1 15-oz. can whole peeled tomatoes in juice, drained, crushed by hand
- 1 bay leaf
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 4 8" Portuguese or hero rolls
- 2 medium Yukon gold potatoes, boiled until tender, peeled and thinly sliced
- 1 small English cucumber, thinly sliced
- 1 medium ripe tomato, thinly sliced
- 2 5-oz. cans tuna in oil
- ½ cup pitted black olives
- ¼ cup capers, rinsed and drained
- 4 pepperoncini peppers, drained, stemmed, and halved lengthwise
- ½ cup harissa (see page 92)

1 Heat oil in a 10" skillet over medium-high heat. Add garlic, onion, and pepper, and cook, stirring, until soft, about 6 minutes. Add tomatoes and bay leaf, and cook, stirring, until sauce is thick and slightly reduced, about 3 minutes. Remove and discard bay leaf, season with salt and pepper, and set aside.

2 Assemble the sandwiches: Split rolls horizontally, leaving them intact on one side. Divide tomato sauce among rolls, top with potatoes, cucumber, and tomato, and then tuna; top with olives, capers, and pepperoncini. Drizzle the top of each with harissa; halve sandwiches crosswise to serve.

Couscous Royale

(Couscous with Grilled Meats)

SERVES 8

A plate of fluffy couscous is lavished with meatballs, lamb chops, chicken skewers, merguez sausage, and a saffron-scented chickpea stew in this celebratory dish (pictured on page 53), a staple at Moroccan restaurants in Paris.

For the grilled meat:

- 1 lb. ground lamb
- 3 tbsp. paprika
- 3 tbsp. ground cumin
- 6 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 small onion, grated
- 1 bunch cilantro, minced
- 1 egg
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 1 lb. boneless, skinless chicken thighs, cut into 1" x 2" pieces
- 8 baby lamb chops
- 8 merguez sausages (see page 92)

For the stew:

- ½ cup olive oil
- 12 oz. boneless lamb shoulder, trimmed and cut into 1" pieces
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- ½ cup flour
- 4 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 2 medium carrots, peeled and cut into ¼"-thick slices
- 2 ribs celery, roughly chopped
- 2 small red Holland chiles, stemmed, seeded, and chopped
- 1 medium yellow onion, roughly chopped
- 1 medium white turnip, peeled and cut into 1" pieces
- 1 medium zucchini, cut into 1" pieces
- ½ cup golden raisins
- 2 tbsp. tomato paste
- 1 tsp. paprika
- ½ tsp. ground ginger
- ¼ tsp. crushed saffron threads
- 2 sticks cinnamon
- 2 bay leaves
- 4 cups chicken stock
- 1 cup dried chickpeas, soaked overnight, drained
- 1 15-oz. can whole peeled tomatoes in juice, crushed by hand
- 1 small head cabbage, cored and roughly chopped
- 1 bunch parsley, finely chopped
- Juice of 1 lemon

For the couscous:

- 4 tbsp. unsalted butter
- 3 tbsp. olive oil
- 3 cups fine-grain couscous
- Harissa, for serving

1 Marinate the meat: Place ground lamb, ½ tbsp. paprika, 1½ tbsp. cumin, half the garlic, onion, ⅓ of the cilantro, egg, and salt and pepper in a bowl, and mix until evenly combined. Divide mixture into 12 oval balls, about 1 oz. each, and

place 3 balls each on 8" wooden skewers; place skewers on a plate and refrigerate until ready to grill. Place remaining paprika, cumin, garlic, and cilantro in a bowl, add chicken and lamb chops, and season with salt and pepper; toss to combine. Cover, and marinate in the refrigerator for at least 1 hour.

2 Make the stew: Heat oil in an 8-qt. saucepan over medium-high heat. Working in batches, season lamb with salt and pepper, dredge in flour, and cook, turning as needed, until browned all over, about 6 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, transfer meat to a bowl; set aside. Add garlic, carrots, celery, chiles, onion, turnip, and zucchini to saucepan, and cook, stirring, until golden brown, about 12 minutes. Add raisins, tomato paste, paprika, ginger, saffron, cinnamon, and bay leaves, and cook, stirring, until lightly caramelized, about 3 minutes. Return lamb to pan along with stock, chickpeas, tomatoes, and cabbage, and bring to a boil; reduce heat to medium, and cook, covered and stirring occasionally, until meat and chickpeas are very tender, about 2½ hours. Season with salt and pepper, and stir in parsley and juice; keep warm.

3 Make the couscous: Bring butter, oil, and 6 cups water to a boil over high heat. Stir in couscous, season with salt and pepper, and cover; remove from the heat, and let sit until water is absorbed, about 10 minutes. Fluff couscous with a fork; set aside in a warm place.

4 Build a medium-hot fire in a charcoal grill, or heat a gas grill to medium-high. (Alternatively, heat a cast-iron grill pan over medium-high heat.) Remove chicken from marinade, divide and thread among 4 more wooden skewers, and working in batches, add to grill; cook, turning once, until charred in spots and cooked through, about 10 minutes. Transfer to a serving platter, and repeat with lamb skewers, lamb chops, and sausages, about 16 minutes for the lamb skewers, about 7 minutes for lamb chops, and about 18 minutes for sausages. Serve stew, couscous, and grilled meats together on the table with harissa on the side.

Mahjouba

(Algerian Crêpes)

SERVES 8

These thick, flaky crêpes (pictured on page 49) stuffed with a jammy tomato-based filling are a typical street snack in Algeria.

- 6 small yellow onions, roughly chopped
- 3 red Holland chiles, stemmed and seeded
- 2 medium carrots, roughly chopped
- ¼ cup olive oil, plus more for greasing
- 3 tbsp. tomato paste
- 1 15-oz. can whole peeled tomatoes in juice, drained, crushed by hand
- 2 tbsp. kosher salt, plus more to taste
- Freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 1 cup packed cilantro leaves, finely chopped
- 4½ cups fine semolina

1 Combine onions, chiles, and carrots in a food processor, and process until finely chopped. Heat oil in a 12" skillet over medium-high heat. Add chopped vegetables, and cook, stirring, until soft and caramelized, about 20 minutes. Add tomato paste, and cook until lightly caramelized, about 3 minutes. Add tomatoes, season with salt and pepper, and cook, stirring, until mixture is thick and slightly dry, about 45 minutes. Remove from heat and stir in cilantro; let filling cool.

2 Meanwhile, combine 2 tbsp. salt, semolina, and 2 cups water in a bowl, and stir until dough forms. Transfer to a work surface, and knead until the dough is smooth and no longer sticky, about 8 minutes. Divide dough into 8 equal pieces, shape into balls, and place on a lightly oiled baking sheet; cover loosely with plastic wrap and let rest for 30 minutes.

3 Lightly oil a work surface (marble works best), and working one at a time, flatten dough ball into a disk using the heel of your hands until it is about ¼" thick. Gently pull the edges to stretch the dough into a paper-thin rectangle, about 15" long and 12" wide. Place a scant ½ cup filling in the center of the dough, and spread it out to a 6" x 4" rectangle. Fold the long sides of the rectangle over the filling, and then fold over the short sides, pressing to seal and enclose the filling. Repeat with remaining dough and filling.

4 Heat a 12" nonstick skillet over medium heat, place one packet seam side-down in skillet, and cook, flipping once, until browned in spots, about 12 minutes; repeat with remaining packets.

Mrouzia

(Honey-Braised Lamb Shanks)

SERVES 4

Lamb shanks are braised for hours in a sumptuous sauce of honey, almonds, and raisins in this centuries-old Moroccan dish (pictured on page 48) served at the restaurant Mansouria.

- ½ olive oil
- 3 tbsp. unsalted butter
- 4 lamb shanks, frenched, if desired
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 1 large white onion, finely chopped
- 1 cup golden raisins
- 2 tbsp. ras el hanout (store-bought, see page 92, or see recipe, below)
- ¼ tsp. crushed saffron threads
- 1 stick cinnamon
- 1 cup blanched whole almonds
- ¾ cup honey
- Toasted sesame seeds, to garnish

1 Heat oil and butter in an 8-qt. Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Season lamb generously with salt and pepper, and cook, turning as needed, until well browned all over, about 12 minutes. Transfer lamb to a plate; set aside.

2 Add onion to pot, and cook, stirring, until soft, about 4 minutes. Add raisins, ras el hanout, saffron, and cinnamon, and cook, stirring, until fragrant, about 2 minutes. Add lamb, almonds, honey, and 3 cups water, and bring to a boil; reduce heat to medium, and cook, partially covered, until lamb is very tender, about 3½ hours. Divide shanks and sauce among serving plates, and sprinkle each with sesame seeds.

Ras el Hanout

(North African Spice Mix)

MAKES 1 CUP

This piquant North African spice mix, whose name means "top of the shop" in Arabic, is used in virtually every dish from that region, including the Moroccan *mrouzia*, honey-braised lamb shanks (above).

- 3 tbsp. whole allspice
- 3 tbsp. whole black peppercorns
- 3 tbsp. coriander seeds
- 2 tbsp. whole cloves
- 2 tbsp. cumin seeds
- 5 sticks cinnamon, broken into 1" pieces
- 2 tbsp. ground ginger
- 1½ tbsp. ground cayenne

Working in batches, grind allspice, peppercorns, coriander, cloves, cumin, and cinnamon separately in a spice grinder until finely ground; transfer spices to a bowl, and stir in ginger and cayenne. Store in an airtight container for up to 2 months.

Kefta Tagine

(Lamb Meatball and Egg Tagine)

SERVES 8

Cumin- and paprika-spiced *kefta* (lamb meatballs), baked eggs, and kalamata olives, are the hallmarks of this elegant tagine (pictured on page 52) from the Moroccan restaurant Le Timgad in Paris.

- 1 lb. ground lamb
- 1½ tbsp. ground cumin
- 1½ tbsp. paprika
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 4 tbsp. unsalted butter
- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 large yellow onion, minced
- 1 tsp. crushed red chile flakes
- ½ tsp. ground ginger
- ½ tsp. crushed saffron threads
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 28-oz. can whole peeled tomatoes in juice, drained, crushed by hand
- 4 eggs
- ½ cup unpitted kalamata olives
- ¼ cup finely chopped parsley

1 Place lamb, 1 tbsp. cumin, 1 tbsp. paprika, and salt and pepper in a bowl, and mix until evenly combined. Form mixture into 12 balls, about 1 oz. each, and place on a plate; chill *kefta* until ready to use.

2 Heat butter and oil in a 6-qt. Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Add garlic and onion, and cook, stirring, until soft, about 5 minutes. Add remaining cumin and paprika, chile flakes, ginger, saffron, and bay leaf, and cook, stirring, until fragrant, about 2 minutes. Add tomatoes, and cook, stirring, until broken down and sauce is slightly reduced, about 10 minutes. Add *kefta*, and cook, covered, until cooked through, about 10 minutes. Crack eggs over the top, and arrange olives around eggs; cover, and continue cooking until whites are cooked and yolks are slightly runny, about 8 minutes. Uncover and sprinkle with parsley before serving.

Tagine Djaj Bzitoun

(Chicken Tagine with Apricots, Figs, and Olives)

SERVES 6–8

Briny olives, sweet apricots and

figs, and tart preserved lemons flavor this aromatic North African braised chicken stew (pictured on page 47).

- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 3–4-lb. whole chicken, cut into 8 pieces
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 4 tbsp. unsalted butter
- 4 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 2 large yellow onions, finely chopped
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 tsp. ground cumin
- 1 tsp. paprika
- 1 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp. ground ginger
- ¼ tsp. crushed saffron threads
- 2 cups chicken stock
- 1 cup pitted large green olives
- ½ cup dried apricots, roughly chopped
- 4 dried Turkish figs, roughly chopped
- 2 preserved lemons, quartered lengthwise (see page 92)
- ½ cup finely chopped cilantro
- 3 tbsp. fresh lemon juice
- Cooked couscous, for serving

1 Heat oil in a 6-qt. Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Season chicken with salt and pepper, and add to pot; cook, turning once, until lightly browned on both sides, about 10 minutes. Transfer to a plate, and set aside.

2 Heat butter in pot, and then add garlic and onions; cook, stirring, until soft, about 15 minutes. Add bay leaves, cumin, paprika, cinnamon, ginger, and saffron, and cook, stirring, until fragrant, about 2 minutes. Return chicken to pot along with stock, olives, apricots, figs, and preserved lemons, and bring to a boil; reduce heat to medium-low, and cook, partially covered, until chicken is cooked through and tender, about 15 minutes. Stir in cilantro, and juice, and remove from heat; serve over couscous.

Samsa Feuille de Brick

(Fried Almond Pastries)

MAKES ABOUT 2 DOZEN

These sticky-sweet fried pastries (pictured on page 53), drenched in a syrup of honey and orange flower water, are typical of the rustic desserts of Tunisia.

- 1 lb. whole blanched almonds
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 tbsp. vanilla extract

- ½ tsp. kosher salt
- ¼ tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1 egg white, lightly beaten
- 1 lb. 13" x 18" sheets phyllo dough
- Canola oil, for frying
- 2 cups sugar
- ¼ cup honey
- 2 tbsp. fresh lemon juice
- 1 tbsp. orange flower water

1 Make the filling: Heat oven to 350°. Place almonds on a rimmed baking sheet, and place in oven; bake, stirring once, until lightly toasted, about 8 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack, and let cool. Transfer almonds to a food processor, and add sugar; process until very finely ground. Add vanilla, salt, cinnamon, egg white, and 2 tbsp. water, and process until a moist, slightly sticky paste forms. Transfer to a bowl, and set aside.

2 Form the pastries: Place 2 sheets of phyllo dough on a work surface and cut lengthwise into 4 equal strips. Place 1 tbsp. filling at the end of each strip closest to you. Working with one strip at a time, fold the right corner over filling so that it lines up with the left side, forming a triangle; continue folding triangle along the strip as you would fold a flag, until it reaches the end. Brush the end portion of each strip with water, and then fold over pastry to seal; repeat folding with remaining strips, and then repeat filling and folding process with remaining phyllo sheets and filling.

3 Pour oil to a depth of 2" in a 6-qt. Dutch oven, and heat over medium-high heat until a deep-fry thermometer reads 350°. Working in batches, add pastries to oil and fry, tossing occasionally, until golden brown and filling is hot, about 1–2 minutes. Using tongs, transfer pastries to a wire rack set over paper towels to drain; set aside.

4 Meanwhile, bring sugar and 1 cup water to a boil in a 2-qt. saucepan over high heat, stirring to dissolve sugar, about 3 minutes. Remove from heat, and stir in honey, juice, and orange flower water. Transfer pastries to a rimmed baking sheet so they sit in one even layer. Pour hot syrup evenly over pastries, and let sit until pastries soak up some of the syrup, about 10 minutes (they will not soak up all the syrup). Let sit 10 minutes before serving.



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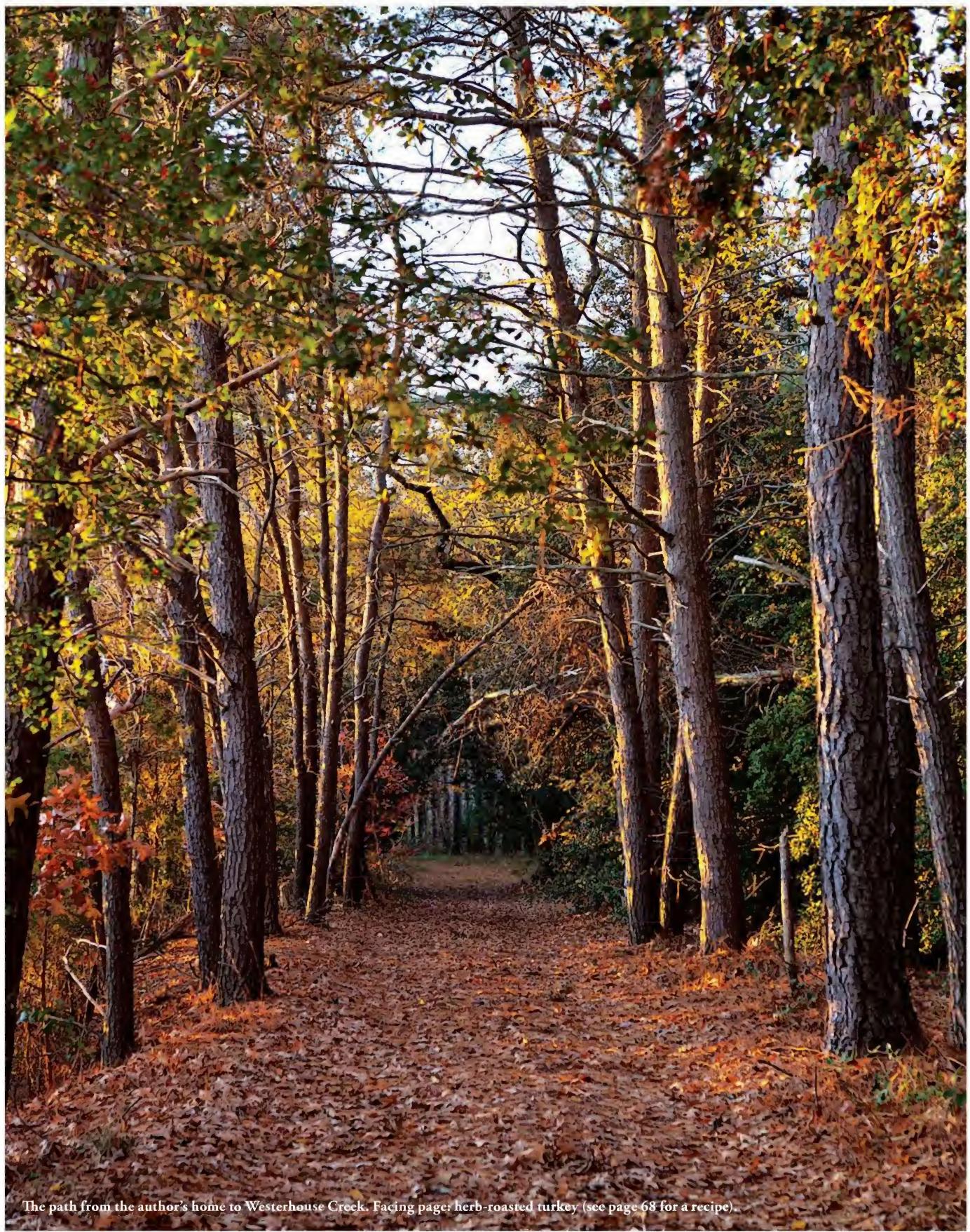


TIDY SHORE

A THANKSGIVING FEAST ON THE CHESAPEAKE BAY CELEBRATES THE FOODS OF VIRGINIA'S EARLIEST SETTLERS

BY BERNARD L. HERMAN PHOTOGRAPHS BY BETH ROONEY

From left: the author, his sister, Fredrika Jacobs, and her daughter, Jessica Roussanov, outside the author's home on the Eastern Shore of Virginia.



The path from the author's home to Westerhouse Creek. Facing page: herb-roasted turkey (see page 68 for a recipe).



Just before dawn on Thanksgiving morning, I pull on my waders, grab a basket, and splash my way to the oyster cages that lie a hundred or so yards from our house on the banks of Westerhouse Creek, not far from the shore of Chesapeake Bay. Light from the kitchen windows flickers across the water. The first winter jellyfish pulse in the flowing tide. Hauling one of the cages onto the lip of a sandbar, I brush away seaweed, unhook the lid, and peer at the oysters inside. Silvery grass shrimp somersault across the shells. Mud crabs skitter to the cage's bottom. A drowsy oyster toad squirms in a corner. Into my basket, I

toss big handfuls of oysters—a favorite delicacy at the Thanksgiving meal my family hosts every year on Virginia's Eastern Shore, the long, narrow peninsula that forms the eastern boundary of the lower Chesapeake Bay.

I have loved this place since I was a child growing up here in the 1950s. Even after I moved away, I stayed connected to the Eastern Shore. Over the years, I looked for ways to return to the place, visiting often, and writing academic papers on the peninsula's food and folk traditions, old and new—from the annual October snapping-turtle feast to the everyday life of the Eastern Shore's early settlers and native communities. About ten years ago my wife, Becky, and I bought a second home here, a 1720s brick house south of the village of Bayford, about 20 miles from the peninsula's southern tip. It has become my family's favorite place to spend Thanksgiving.

The company isn't huge by holiday standards: This year it's just me and Becky; my mother, Lucy; my sister, Fredrika (who goes by "Freddie"), and her husband, Paul; their daughter, Jessica, and her six-year old son, Peter; and my 30-year-old daughter, Lania, who's brought her friend Samantha, who everyone calls Sam. As for the meal, it tends to be a bit over the top. For me, it's a coming together of all my favorite Eastern Shore traditions, and a celebration of the local foods that have fed the people of this peninsula for generations—all of it combined with the favorite holiday dishes of the rest of my family.

The Eastern Shore is 70 miles of sandy, fertile land abutting the country's best

clamming and oyster-growing waters. The climate is Mediterranean, and home gardens here yield figs, peaches, and even pomegranates. No matter what time of year it is, when I'm on the Eastern Shore, I always seem to be thinking about provisioning our Thanksgiving meal. Becky and I start our preparations early, in July and August, when we and our friends put up fruit preserves, and savory



pickles made from the tomatoes and okra that the area produces so abundantly.

Throughout the fall, our neighbors who hunt and fish make their contributions, too, though what gets to the table depends on luck and weather. Our neighbor Jon Moore presents us with six venison roasts, and another friend, ace oyster grower Tom Gallivan, drops off a 25-pound bluefish. I rub the venison in black pepper and cayenne, and cure it in the smoker in our backyard, then fillet and smoke the bluefish, before storing both away until November.

As the holiday draws near, our preparations intensify, peaking two days before Thanksgiving, when I embark on the annual "big loop," an epic, daylong drive to visit purveyor friends along the shore. It's my

version of the Thanksgiving harvest. The trip ranges from one end of Northampton County to the other, along back roads bracketed by creek and marsh, field and woodland.

This year, Sam accompanies me. Our first stop is Pickett's Harbor Farms, at the southern tip of the peninsula, where W.T. and Tammie Nottingham live on land W.T.'s family has farmed for generations. They grow heirloom sweet potatoes, including a variety called Hayman that is virtually unique to this area and prized for its dense white flesh and intense sweetness. We pick up a couple dozen of them, plus a medley of other kinds for cooking into casseroles. Next, we drive north to visit James Elliott, the co-owner of A. & J.'s Fresh Meat Market, in the little railroad town of Cheriton. A. & J.'s is where we get our turkey, always naturally raised. James also makes a sage pork sausage that really sings. This year I buy some for our hominy and oyster stuffing, and, as I do every year, I ask him what goes into the sausage. He gives me the same wry answer he always does: "That is something I'm not telling."

After that, we head to JC Walker Brothers Inc. clam house in Willis Wharf. "These just came off the grounds this morning," Hank Arnold, the owner, says as he hands me a 250-count bag of littlenecks. Finally, before heading home, we make a return visit to Tom Gallivan, our oysterman friend, who owns Shooting Point Oyster Company in Bayford, to retrieve two mesh bags of Shooting Point and Nassawadox Salt oysters, to supplement the haul from my own oyster cages.

The next day, Wednesday, preparations really shift into high gear. While I brown the sage sausage in a cast-iron skillet for the stuffing, Becky makes a couple of sweet potato casseroles and a pumpkin cheesecake. I turn next to the smoked bluefish, making a creamy, brandy-spiked pâté. Finally, Lania and Sam prepare an old family standby, juicing lemons and chopping oranges and apples for a cranberry relish that's based on a recipe my mother, a retired elementary school teacher, coaxed from a lunchroom cook in (continued on page 67)

Thanksgiving dinner at the author's Eastern Shore home. Clockwise from top left: hominy, oyster, and sausage stuffing; cranberry-horseradish relish; roasted oysters; yeast rolls; Brussels sprouts and potatoes, creamed spinach with spiced bread crumbs; sweet potato casserole; pickled figs, gravy; fresh cranberry relish; roasted vegetable terrine; and okra pickles. See pages 68 and 70 for recipes.





The author (left) and his brother-in-law, Paul Jacobs, in the kitchen of the author's home. Facing page: pumpkin cheesecake (see page 68 for a recipe).





(continued from page 62) the 1960s. Once our two refrigerators are full, Becky and I tidy the kitchen and turn in for the night.

ON THANKSGIVING DAY, by seven o'clock, I've returned from my oyster beds with a hundred or so Westerhouse Pinks, as I like to call the mollusks native to our creek. I take them over to an old workbench, which will serve as an outdoor buffet table that we've set up in the yard. I lay out a couple dozen of my oysters on ice-filled wooden trays, alongside the ones from Tom Gallivan, then light the propane burner on the pot steamer that I'll be using to steam the littlenecks. Sam and Lania bring out some pickled okra and pickled figs, the bluefish pâté, and the cured, smoked venison, sliced paper thin and served with rounds of crusty bread and coarse brown mustard. At our home, the eating on Thanksgiving starts outdoors, and it starts early.

By ten o'clock, almost everyone has arrived, and the festivities officially commence. In the middle of the yard stands a towering pyre of branches, driftwood, and old stumps, fuel for the bonfire that we always light on Thanksgiving morning and keep burning into the night. This year, Sam does the honors, touching a match to the pile. Flames erupt high in the air, and everyone cheers.

The bonfire lit, it's time to shuck the first oysters. I pop open one of my Westerhouse Pinks; it's fat and sweet. Then I taste a Shooting Point Salt, which has a briny, mineral tang. My brother-in-law, Paul, the family's Thanksgiving sommelier, shows up with a case of domestic bottles from his cellar. For the oysters, we open a chardonnay made just up the road.

As morning turns to afternoon, guests beat a path between the roaring bonfire and the steamy warmth of the kitchen. The turkey—stuffed with the sage sausage and hominy, rubbed with olive oil, and seasoned with fresh parsley, salt, and black pepper—has been roasting for a couple of hours already, and it's filling the room with its aroma. Various family members pursue culinary tasks under Becky's gentle direction. Freddie and Jessica plate creamed spinach and a layered vegetable terrine. Becky pulls a pan of roasted oysters from the oven and sets them out with one relish of pickled green tomatoes and another of horseradish, beets, and cranberries. The cooks

From top: the author's grandnephew, Peter Rousanov, samples desserts, including rum Bundt cake (see page 70 for a recipe); the author heads for his oyster cages in Westerhouse Creek.

A STORIED FEAST

On the Eastern Shore of Virginia, home to some of America's earliest settlements, the Thanksgiving meal features ingredients and dishes that have defined life on the peninsula for generations. Many of the Thanksgiving foods favored on the Eastern Shore, such as *oysters*, precede the holiday itself by a long stretch. For thousands of years, Native Americans harvested mollusks from nearby waters, a practice quickly adopted by the first European colonizers, who arrived in the early 1600s, a good decade before the landing at Plymouth Rock. Today, demand for the bivalves continues undiminished, especially through the winter holidays. Around Thanksgiving, when the water grows cold, oysters fatten up and are at their best. *Corn*, present on Thanksgiving



ing tables these days in the form of corn bread and pudding, has an especially long history in Virginia. It was a staple in the diet of native peoples as well as colonists. You can still find an heirloom variety of corn indigenous to the area grown on the Eastern Shore today—it makes for a dense, moist, delicious corn bread. Locally caught *fish*, too, have always been a fixture of the local diet. Historically, bluefish, croakers, spot, jumping mullet, menhaden, and many



many more were netted, salted, and eaten fried, baked, and boiled. Today, a Sunday-after-Thanksgiving breakfast of baked or poached fish and pancakes remains a distinctly local pleasure. Other emblematic Thanksgiving foods, like *sweet potatoes*, were

introduced after the arrival of Europeans. Many varieties are grown on the Eastern Shore, but whenever I talk to people about Thanksgiving side dishes, they speak lustfully of sugary Hayman sweet potatoes, which have been grown in the region since the mid-1800s, when they were introduced from the Caribbean via North Carolina. *Figs*, another beloved food, made their way to Virginia in the colonial period. They were introduced by European settlers, and have flourished on the Eastern Shore ever since. In summer they're eaten fresh, but it's preserved figs—whole figs in syrup—that have historically had pride of place on Thanksgiving tables.

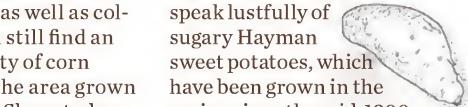
Famously, Grover Cleveland enjoyed them for dessert at an Eastern Shore Thanksgiving in 1892. —B.H.



snatch the oysters right off the baking tray, and in minutes, they're gone. Just before dinner is served, Becky improvises a last-minute dessert of roasted pears stuffed with minced pear, almonds, dried currants, and raisins.

Finally, by midafternoon, all the dishes are ready, arrayed on our kitchen table. In the dining room, my late father's huge, three-by-eight-foot writing desk has been put into service as our dinner table. I head outside to throw a few more branches on the fire and then come in to grab a plate along with everyone else. It is a sumptuous spread: the freshly carved turkey; a platter of thin-sliced aged country ham; the baked Hayman sweet potatoes, incomparably luscious; the Brussels sprouts and rosemary potatoes; plus the pumpkin cheesecake, an apple pie, a boozy rum Bundt cake, and Becky's sugar-glazed roasted pears, which are destined to become a regular addition to the holiday menu. There is no order to serving. Everyone just descends on a favorite dish.

At last, seated, glasses raised, we toast the day, and then we toast the cooks. Becky, looking tired and elated at the same time, clinks her glass with Lania's and says, "Aren't we lucky?" In no time, guests are heading back into the kitchen for seconds. Before dessert, I read aloud from *The Sot-Weed Factor*, John Barth's great novel, written in 1960, about life in the Chesapeake Bay country of the



late 1600s. I select a passage that describes an imagined eating contest between the English explorers and the Ahatchwhoop Indians to choose a king:

[T]he rest watch'd in astonishment, the two gluttons match'd dish for dish, and herewith is the summe of what they eat: Of keskoughnoughmass, the yellowe-belly'd sunne-fish, tenne apiece. Of copatone, the sturgeon, one apiece. Of pummahumpnoughmass, fry'd star-fish, three apiece. Of pawpeonoughmass, pype-fishes, four apiece ...

After a few more lines I break down laughing. By the time the dessert wine and the grappa come out, we're starting to feel like the culinary combatants in Barth's book.

Once night falls, most of the rest of the family departs. The kitchen is a wreck, but it can wait. It's growing chilly, and Becky, Lania, Sam, and I return to the dying bonfire with glasses of wine. "That was a great Thanksgiving," I say to Becky. "Let's talk about next year."

"Let's not," she replies. "We've had enough fun for one day."

But I can't help thinking about next Thanksgiving's big loop, about what we'll cook and eat. Down by the creek the night herons are calling to each other raucously, and I can hear the rasp of the breeze in the marsh grasses. It is the soundscape of the Eastern Shore.

Creamed Spinach with Spiced Bread Crumbs

SERVES 6-8

This luxurious stove-top creamed spinach (pictured on page 63) is enriched with sour cream and topped with crunchy spiced bread crumbs.

- 2 lb. fresh spinach
- 8 tbsp. unsalted butter
- ½ cup fresh bread crumbs
- ¼ tsp. paprika
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 large shallot, minced
- 5 tbsp. flour
- 1½ cups milk
- ½ cup sour cream
- ¼ cup grated Parmesan
- 2 tbsp. fresh lemon juice
- ¼ tsp. freshly grated nutmeg

1 Bring a 4-qt. saucepan of water to a boil; add spinach, and cook until wilted, about 2 minutes. Drain, and squeeze dry with a kitchen towel; set aside. Heat 3 tbsp. butter in a 12" skillet over medium-high heat. Add bread crumbs, paprika, and salt and pepper; cook, stirring, until golden brown, about 2 minutes. Set aside.

2 Add remaining butter to skillet; add garlic and shallot; cook, stirring, until soft, about 3 minutes. Add flour; cook, stirring, for 2 minutes. Add milk; boil. Add spinach, sour cream, Parmesan, juice, nutmeg, and salt and pepper; cook, stirring, until thickened, about 5 minutes. Transfer to a serving dish; sprinkle with bread crumbs.

Fresh Cranberry Relish

MAKES 5 CUPS

This sweet-tart cranberry relish (pictured on page 63) is flavored with cinnamon, fresh citrus, and sweet apples.

- 1 lb. fresh or thawed, frozen cranberries
- 1 cup fresh orange juice
- ¾ cup sugar
- ½ cup fresh lemon juice
- ½ tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp. kosher salt
- ½ tsp. ground black pepper
- Zest of 1 orange
- Zest of 1 lemon
- 2 sweet apples, peeled, cored, and finely shredded

Combine cranberries, orange juice, sugar, lemon juice, cinnamon, salt, pepper, and both zests in a food processor; pulse until berries break down. Transfer to a serving bowl; stir in apples. Chill until ready to serve.

Herb-Roasted Turkey with Hominy, Oyster, and Sausage Dressing

SERVES 8-10

In this recipe from author Bernard L. Herman, rubbing the turkey with olive oil and fresh herbs yields a moist, flavorful bird with crisp skin (pictured on page 61). An apple cider gravy and a dressing of hominy, sausage, and oysters add richness to the festive Thanksgiving centerpiece.

For the stuffing:

- 3 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 large yellow onion, minced
- 1 lb. ground sage-flavored breakfast sausage
- 3 cups shucked oysters, roughly chopped
- 2 cups ¾"-cubed country bread
- 3 tbsp. finely chopped parsley
- 2 tbsp. finely chopped sage
- 1 29-oz. can hominy, drained (see page 92)
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 3 tbsp. unsalted butter, cubed

For the turkey and gravy:

- 1½ cups finely chopped parsley
- 1 cup finely chopped basil
- 1 cup finely chopped oregano
- ½ cup olive oil
- 1 16-lb. turkey, at room temperature, neck reserved
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 8 tbsp. unsalted butter
- ½ cup flour
- ¾ cup apple cider
- ¾ cup white wine
- 6 cups chicken or turkey stock

1 Make the stuffing: Heat oil in a 12" skillet over medium-high heat; add onion; cook, stirring, until soft, about 6 minutes. Add sausage; cook, stirring, until browned, about 10 minutes. Remove from heat, and stir in oysters, bread, parsley, sage, and hominy; season with salt and pepper. Transfer to a 9" x 13" baking dish, and dot with butter; chill.

2 Make the turkey: Heat oven to 450°. Combine parsley, basil, oregano, and oil in a small bowl to create a paste. Season turkey with salt and pepper; rub outside with paste. Place turkey, breast side up, in a large roasting pan along with neck and butter; roast, basting turkey every 30 minutes, until an instant-read thermometer inserted into the thighs reads 165°, about 3½-4 hours. Transfer turkey to a cutting board; set aside. Discard neck and pour drippings through a fine strainer

into a bowl. Meanwhile, place stuffing in oven; bake until golden brown on top, about 30 minutes.

3 Return ½ cup drippings to roasting pan, discarding any remaining drippings, and place over two burners of a stove; heat over medium-high heat. Add flour, and cook, whisking constantly, for 3 minutes. Add cider and wine, and cook, stirring to scrape up the browned bits on the bottom of the pan, until slightly reduced, about 3 minutes. Add stock, bring to a boil, and cook, stirring, until gravy is thickened, about 5 minutes; season with salt and pepper. Carve the turkey, and serve with stuffing and gravy.

Okra Pickles

MAKES 1 QUART

Based on a recipe from the author's friend, Eastern Shore musician William "Pooh" Johnston, these spicy pickles (pictured on page 63) are a delicious accompaniment to the Thanksgiving meal.

- 1 lb. okra
- 4 cloves garlic
- 3 sprigs fresh dill
- 1 habanero or Scotch bonnet chile, stemmed and halved
- 2 cups white wine vinegar
- 2 tbsp. kosher salt
- 1½ tbsp. mustard seeds
- ½ tbsp. fennel seeds
- 8 whole black peppercorns

Combine okra, garlic, dill, and chile in a sterilized 2-qt. glass jar; set aside. Bring vinegar, salt, both seeds, peppercorns, and 1½ cups water to a boil in a 4-qt. saucepan over high heat, stirring to dissolve salt. Pour into jar, seal, and let cool to room temperature; refrigerate for up to 1 month.

Pumpkin Cheesecake

SERVES 12

Rum and gingersnaps give this decadent dessert (pictured on page 65) a spicy, warming flavor.

- 13 oz. gingersnap cookies
- ½ cup chopped walnuts
- ½ cup confectioners' sugar
- 8 tbsp. unsalted butter, melted
- 1½ lb. cream cheese, softened
- 1 cup sugar
- ¾ cup canned pumpkin
- 3 tbsp. dark rum
- 1½ tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- ½ tsp. kosher salt
- ¼ tsp. ground cloves
- ¼ tsp. ground ginger
- ¼ tsp. ground mace
- 2 eggs

1 Heat oven to 350°. Process gingersnaps, walnuts, and confectioners' sugar in a food processor until finely ground. Add butter; pulse until evenly combined. Transfer to a 9" springform pan set on a rimmed baking sheet, and press crumbs into the bottom and halfway up the sides of the pan; set aside.

2 Clean food processor, and then add cream cheese, sugar, pumpkin, rum, cinnamon, vanilla, salt, cloves, ginger, mace, and eggs; puree, stopping to scrape down bowl with a rubber spatula at least once, until smooth. Pour into crust; bake until browned on top and the middle jiggles slightly when the pan is tapped, about 1½ hours. Let cool to room temperature; chill until set, at least 4 hours or overnight.

Roasted Oysters with Green Tomato Pickle and Cranberry-Horseradish Relish

SERVES 10-12

The sweet-tart green tomato pickle, and the spicy cranberry and horseradish relish (pictured on page 63) are delicious with roasted oysters, an Eastern Shore staple.

For the green tomato pickle:

- 1½ lb. green tomatoes, cored and finely chopped
- 1 small yellow onion, minced
- 2 tbsp. kosher salt
- ¾ cup apple cider vinegar
- ½ cup packed light brown sugar
- 1 tsp. whole black peppercorns
- 1 tsp. mustard seeds
- ½ tsp. whole allspice
- ½ tsp. cumin seeds
- ½ tsp. celery seeds
- 4 whole cloves
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 bay leaves
- 2 dried chiles de arbol

For the cranberry-horseradish relish:

- 1 cup fresh or thawed, frozen cranberries
- 1 small yellow onion
- 1 lb. fresh horseradish, peeled and finely grated
- 1 cup honey
- 1 tsp. kosher salt
- ½ tsp. ground cinnamon
- ¼ tsp. freshly grated nutmeg
- 2 medium carrots, finely grated
- 1 small red beet, peeled and finely grated
- 1 large Granny Smith apple, peeled and finely grated
- 1 1"-piece ginger, peeled and finely grated
- 50 oysters in their shells, scrubbed clean



Roasted sugar-glazed pears (see page 70 for a recipe).

1 Make the green tomato pickle: Place tomato and onion in a large fine strainer; sprinkle with 2 tbsp. salt. Toss until evenly combined; let sit for 30 minutes to drain. Transfer to a 4-qt. saucepan, and add remaining ingredients and 1½ cups water; boil. Reduce heat to medium; cook, stirring, until tomatoes are tender and mixture is slightly reduced, about 50 minutes. Remove from heat; set aside to cool.

2 Make the cranberry-horseradish relish: Purée cranberries and onion in a food processor until smooth. Transfer to a bowl; add remaining ingredients except oysters. Stir until evenly combined; let sit at least 30 minutes to meld flavors.

3 Roast the oysters and serve: Heat oven to 450°. Place oysters, rounded side down, in a large roasting pan so they fit in no deeper than 2 layers, and pour in 2 cups water; roast until shells open, about 20–25 minutes. Transfer pan to a wire rack, and cover with a large kitchen towel; let oysters sit and steam until cool enough to handle. Using an oyster knife, remove upper shell of oysters. Serve on the half shell with green tomato pickle and cranberry-horseradish relish on the side.

Roasted Vegetable Terrine

SERVES 10–12

Our take on this colorful terrine (pictured on page 63) features smoky roasted vegetables, tangy goat cheese, and a sun-dried tomato pesto.

- 1 large red bell pepper
- 1 large yellow bell pepper
- ½ cup olive oil, plus more for brushing vegetables
- 1 small eggplant, cut lengthwise into ¼" slices
- 1 large zucchini, cut lengthwise into ¼" slices
- 1 large yellow squash, cut lengthwise into ¼" slices
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 2 lb. fresh spinach
- 4 oz. soft goat cheese, softened
- ½ cup minced basil
- 2 tbsp. minced oregano
- 2 tbsp. minced parsley
- 1 tbsp. minced thyme
- ½ tsp. crushed red chile flakes
- 1 cup sun-dried tomatoes
- 2 cloves garlic
- 1 cup walnuts
- ½ cup grated Parmesan
- 2 tbsp. balsamic vinegar

1 Position a rack 4" from broiler, and heat to high. Place both peppers on

a foil-lined baking sheet, and broil, turning as needed, until charred all over, about 30 minutes. Transfer to a bowl, and cover with plastic wrap; let sit for 20 minutes. Peel, core, and seed peppers; set aside. Heat oven to 450°. Brush two foil-lined baking sheets with oil. Place eggplant slices on one baking sheet and zucchini and squash slices on second baking sheet; brush with more oil, and season with salt and pepper. Roast vegetables, turning as needed, until tender, about 35–40 minutes; let cool.

2 Bring a 4-qt. saucepan of water to a boil; add spinach, and cook until wilted, about 2 minutes. Drain and squeeze dry with a kitchen towel; set aside. Combine ¼ cup oil, goat cheese, half the basil, oregano, parsley, thyme, and half the chile flakes in a medium bowl; season with salt and pepper, and mix until smooth; set goat cheese mixture aside. Place sun-dried tomatoes and garlic in a bowl, and cover with 2 cups boiling water; let sit for 10 minutes. Drain and transfer to a food processor along with ¼ cup oil, remaining basil and chile flakes, walnuts, Parmesan, and vinegar; season with salt and pepper, puree, and set pesto aside.

3 Line a 9" x 5" loaf pan with plastic wrap, letting at least 4" hang over the edges. Use ⅔ of the spinach to line the 4 sides of the pan. Place eggplant slices on bottom, and then cover with half the pesto; top with zucchini slices and then the goat cheese mixture. Spread peppers over goat cheese mixture, and then top with remaining pesto; top with squash, and then the remaining spinach. Fold excess plastic over top of terrine, and cover with a piece of cardboard cut to fit inside the rim of the pan. Place three 15-oz. cans on top to weigh down terrine, and refrigerate for at least 8 hours or overnight. Unwrap, and invert terrine onto a serving platter; cut into 1"-thick slices to serve.

Rum Bundt Cake

SERVES 12–16

This supremely moist, boozy Southern Bundt cake (pictured on page 66) is based on one made by Agnes Nuro, a friend of author Bernard L. Herman.

- 8 tbsp. unsalted butter, plus more for pan
- 2 cups flour, plus more for pan
- 2½ cups sugar
- ¼ cup dry milk powder
- 3 tbsp. cornstarch
- 1 tbsp. baking powder
- 1 tsp. kosher salt

- 1 cup dark rum
- ½ cup milk
- ½ cup canola oil
- 1 tbsp. vanilla
- 4 eggs

1 Heat oven to 325°. Grease and flour a 10" Bundt pan; set aside. Whisk together flour, 1¼ cups sugar, milk powder, cornstarch, baking powder, and salt in a large bowl; set aside. Whisk together ½ cup rum, milk, oil, vanilla, and eggs in a medium bowl until smooth; pour over dry ingredients, and whisk until just combined. Pour batter into prepared pan, and smooth top; bake until golden brown and a toothpick inserted in the middle comes out clean, about 1 hour. Let cool for 20 minutes, and then unmold and let cool.

2 Bring butter, remaining sugar, and ¼ cup water to a boil in a 2-qt. saucepan over high heat; cook, stirring to dissolve sugar, for 5 minutes. Remove from heat, and stir in remaining rum. Place cooled cake, top side down, on a wire rack set over a baking sheet, and poke holes all over the bottom and sides. Slowly pour syrup all over cake, letting it soak into the cake as you pour. Let cake cool completely before serving.

Roasted Sugar-Glazed Pears

SERVES 6

In this recipe, almonds, currants, and raisins are stuffed inside pears, which are roasted for a simple, yet elegant dessert (pictured on page 69).

- 7 firm pears
- 3 tbsp. rum
- 2 tbsp. dried currants
- 2 tbsp. golden raisins
- 2 tbsp. light brown sugar
- 2 tbsp. whole, blanched almonds, finely chopped
- 1 tsp. ground cinnamon
- ¼ tsp. freshly grated nutmeg
- ¼ tsp. kosher salt
- 1 2"-piece ginger, peeled and minced
- Zest and juice of 1 lemon
- Zest and juice of 1 orange
- 4 tbsp. unsalted butter, softened, plus more for greasing
- ½ cup sugar

1 Peel, core, and finely chop 1 pear and place it in a 2-qt. saucepan along with rum, currants, raisins, brown sugar, almonds, ¼ tsp. cinnamon, nutmeg, salt, ginger, and both zest and juices; boil. Reduce heat to medium-low; cook, stirring, until mixture is soft and thickened, about 15 minutes. Let cool.

2 Heat oven to 350°. Grease a 9" glass pie dish with butter; set aside. Combine remaining cinnamon with sugar in a bowl; set aside. Using a channel knife, cut a spiral pattern in the skin of each remaining pear from top to bottom, if you like. Carefully core each pear from the bottom with a melon baller, coring about 1½–2" deep. Divide stuffing among pears; brush outsides with butter and roll in cinnamon-sugar mixture to coat. Stand pears upright in the prepared dish, and sprinkle with remaining cinnamon-sugar; bake until just tender when pierced with a paring knife, about 40 minutes. Let cool 10 minutes before serving.

Sweet Potato Casserole

SERVES 12–16

A variation of traditional sweet potato casserole (pictured on page 63) this side gets its depth of flavor from bourbon and pineapple.

- 5½ lb. sweet potatoes
- ½ cup dark brown sugar
- ¼ cup bourbon
- 4 tbsp. unsalted butter, melted
- 1½ tsp. kosher salt
- 1 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp. ground ginger
- ½ tsp. ground allspice
- ½ tsp. freshly grated nutmeg
- ½ tsp. ground black pepper
- 2 eggs
- 1 8-oz. can crushed pineapple
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 4 egg whites

1 Heat oven to 350°. Place potatoes on a foil-lined baking sheet; bake until tender, about 1½ hours. Peel and transfer to a food processor along with brown sugar, bourbon, butter, 1 tsp. salt, cinnamon, ginger, allspice, nutmeg, pepper, eggs, and pineapple; puree. Transfer to a 9" x 13" baking dish; bake until heated through, about 25 minutes.

2 While casserole bakes, bring sugar, and ¼ cup water to a boil in a 1-qt. saucepan over high heat; attach a candy thermometer to the side of the pan, and cook, without stirring, until syrup reaches 250°. Meanwhile, place remaining salt, vanilla, and egg whites in a large bowl; beat on medium-high speed of a hand mixer until soft peaks form. While beating, slowly drizzle in hot syrup, and beat until meringue is thickened and cooled.

3 Heat broiler to high. Spread meringue over casserole; broil until lightly browned, about 2 minutes.

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A photograph showing two women from the Garifuna community in Honduras. One woman, on the left, wears a black and white striped tank top and a large, patterned headwrap; she is seen from behind, reaching for a bag of flour. The other woman, on the right, wears a colorful orange and yellow headwrap and a patterned dress; she is smiling and looking down at a large woven basket filled with cassava pulp. In the background, there's a counter with various kitchen items, including a blue bowl and some plastic containers.

CASSAVA NATION

FOR THE GARIFUNA PEOPLE OF COASTAL HONDURAS, COMING TOGETHER TO COOK THE FOODS OF THEIR ANCESTORS PROVIDES A SENSE OF IDENTITY AND CONTINUITY THAT TRANSCENDS BORDERS

BY BETSY ANDREWS PHOTOGRAPHY BY PENNY DE LOS SANTOS



In Ciriboya, Honduras,
Camilla Leslie Cri-
santo Avila sifts cassava
to make flour for bread
while other Garifuna
women look on.

T

HE FISH, RUBBED WITH GARLIC and cumin, was frying, and the coconut milk was bubbling on the stove when Mama Nicha walked through the room. "Now it smells like a Garifuna kitchen!" she proclaimed in Spanish. At 75 years old, this tireless community leader presides over a busy household and language school in the seaside city of La Ceiba, Honduras. She was getting ready to teach a lesson to youngsters who were hoping to add English to the Spanish and Garifuna they already spoke.

Dionisia "Mama Nicha" Amaya-Bonilla and her students are Garifuna, descendants of Africans and Native Americans who live, a nation within nations, along the Caribbean coast of Honduras as well as in neighboring Belize, Guatemala, Nicaragua, and, nowadays, several U.S. cities. The most common story of their origins tells of slave ships that sank in the early-17th century, and of the Africans who escaped the wrecks and swam to the island of St. Vincent, there to mix with the indigenous Carib Indians and to thrive for more than 100 years, their numbers reinforced by other escapees of the region's slave plantations.

The Garifuna fished; they grew cassava and other Carib crops, as well as colonial imports like plantains, which they used in a dense mash akin to African *fufú*. They skirmished with the French and the British, resisting subjugation until 1797, when the British defeated them and exiled thousands of Garifuna to the island of Balliceaux. Starvation and illness decimated their numbers. Later that year, survivors were deported to the island of Roatán, off Honduras. From there they migrated to the mainland, eventually spreading out along Central America's Caribbean coast. The Garifuna brought their culture and language with them, living off the bounty of the shore. Though modern times have seen the Garifuna squeezed out of many of their valuable beachfronts, they remain fierce in their identity.

"We were deported from St. Vincent because we refused to be enslaved," Mama Nicha explained to me. "They deported us to nowhere, hoping we'd die. But we didn't. It's been 215 years, and we are still here."

In the kitchen beside Mama Nicha's classroom, her niece, Mirna Martinez, a big woman in a maroon dress and matching headwrap, was deftly cubing cassava and sweet potatoes in the palm of her hand with a dull kitchen knife. I knew the knife was dull because her cooking partner on this day, Robinson Chimilio, complained about it. A young chef in Coke-bottle glasses, Chimilio, like many Garifuna men, often works on cruise ships or abroad. He had arranged the mise-en-place just so for his dish—green banana dumplings called *alabundigas*, served with meaty turbot steaks in a coconut milk-based sauce. After a while, Martinez set out her *tapou*, a fish, green banana, and root vegetable stew emboldened with plenty of garlic and crimson achiote paste. We dug in, eating silently, scooping leftovers off of each other's plates, picking fish from the bone with our hands.

"Semeiti weigie, idia!" said my guide and friend, Lina

From top: Boys enjoy a lunch of fried conch, kingfish, plantains, and rice and beans with coconut milk (see page 83 for a recipe) at Restaurante Corozal, in Corozal, Honduras; the restaurant's sea-food soup (see page 83 for a recipe).

She set out her *tapou*, a fish, green banana, and root vegetable stew made with coconut milk and emboldened with plenty of garlic and crimson-red achiote paste



Hortensia Martinez, and then she translated from Garifuna: *Our food is delicious, right?*

Indeed it was. I could understand why Chimilio and Mirna Martinez took such pride in their cooking. Elemental yet opulently flavored, these dishes said a lot about who the Garifuna are, and how, in a changing and challenging world, they manage to hold fast to their identity.

"Our food is survival food," said Mama Nicha after lunch. "We will not die of hunger if we have banana, fish, coconut, and we know that. You go to the sea and fish, and there are coconuts on the beach. You don't need money."

OF COURSE, NOTHING, really, exists separately from money, not even the Garifuna culture. So I found the day I

GARIFUNA COOKING ESSENTIALS

HANA Hand-carved out of wood (originally mahogany, but now often-times pine), this large mortar (right) with its 4-foot-long pestle is used to beat boiled plantains for the *fufu*-like mash that is eaten with fish-and-coconut stew in the dish called *hudutu*, an iconic meal whose name means “it has been pounded.” Similar tools are used in West Africa, where ancestors of the Garifuna originated.



EKI Fashioned from a hand-hewn wooden board studded with sharp pieces of quartzite stone, this tool (below) is traditionally used to grate cassava to make flour for bread, as well as coconuts to make coconut milk, and bananas for the dumplings called *alabundigas*. The sturdy tool is often passed down from mother to daughter over several generations.



CASSAVA FLOUR

The Garifuna peel, wash, and grate the native Caribbean root vegetable cassava. Then they press it in a woven strainer to extract its toxic juice, and finally dry it to make a starchy flour that, when cooked over a wood fire, binds into a wafer-like flatbread. In packaged form (below) or hand-milled, cassava flour can be used as a gluten-free substitute for wheat flour.

SIDE BAR: TODD COLEMAN (3)



met Lina, a year before my trip to Honduras, at a food festival in the Bronx, where many of New York City's estimated 200,000 Garifuna live. Lina was in New York promoting her business of exporting cassava bread made by Garifuna women's cooperatives in the municipality of Iriona, in Honduras' remote northeast. For these women the starchy flatbread, a Garifuna staple, offers a potential livelihood and therefore a way to keep their coastal lifestyle—one based on communal fishing, farming, and cooking—intact.

I was so compelled by the down-to-earth beauty of the Garifuna foods I sampled that day that I called Lina afterward; without hesitation she invited me down to Honduras. And that's how I ended up here, among the Garifuna in and around La Ceiba, Lina's home, eating delectable Garifuna food. At Chef Güity, a restaurant overlooking La Ceiba's pier, we savored a creamy soup chock-full of tender hunks of conch, and another made with briny she-crabs bursting with roe. In the nearby Garifuna town of Corozal, we hung out beneath the pavilion roof of Restaurante Corozal, where





Tapou, fish, green banana, and rice vegetable stew (see page 83 for a recipe). Facing page: Dina Palacios in Ciriboya, Honduras.



KINGFISH King mackerel, commonly known as kingfish, migrate through the Caribbean Sea in spring en route to the Gulf of Mexico. The off-white, firm, oil-rich fish is a ubiquitous ingredient throughout the region, including in the cooking of the Garifuna. It is often cut into steaks (below), which are marinated in citrus, rubbed in garlic and herbs, and fried before simmering in coconut milk stew.



COCONUT Perhaps the most essential Garifuna ingredient, coconut (below) is grated, mixed with water, and squeezed to create coconut milk, which is used in stews, soups, and breads. Coconut oil, used for frying, is obtained by simmering the milk to release its fats, which are then skimmed off. The grated meat is also cooked with sugar and spices for sweets.



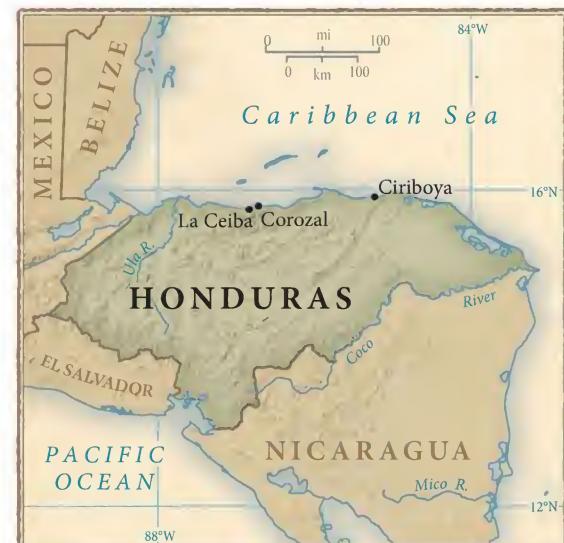
CUBAN OREGANO Instead of the Mediterranean oregano commonly used in the U.S., Garifuna cooks, like others in the Caribbean and Latin America, use this native African mint variety (below). It has a sage-like aroma, and large, juicy, bitter leaves that take on a delicate sweetness when cooked. Though it's not widely available in U.S. groceries, it's easy to grow at home.



proprietress Maritza Centeno maintains a museum of Garifuna folk objects, many of them cooking utensils. Of the enormous wooden mortar and pestle called a *hana*, used for pounding plantains, Centeno said, "This is African culture." There was a grater called an *egi*, fashioned from bits of jagged stone embedded in a board, and a *ruguma*, the woven sleeve used to squeeze the juice from grated cassava.

A group of young musicians from the local church slapped out Garifuna rhythms on their drums, and we devoured platters of fried conch, kingfish, plantains, and rice and beans. Though the lunch included foods eaten, as well, by the country's mestizo majority, the predominance of seafood reflected the Garifuna's coastal palate, and the rice and beans were sweet from cooking in that quintessential Garifuna ingredient, coconut milk.

Lina and I walked off lunch, strolling past concrete-block houses wedged between the highway and the Caribbean Sea. "When the road was built," Lina said, "people felt the land had been cut in half, so they moved to the beach side and sold the other. Now the Garifuna live shoved up next to one another, with health, water, and housing problems."



Among other challenges facing the Garifuna along this coastline, there are the land-grabbing tourist developments in Trujillo, two hours east of Corozal; the palm oil plantations threatening to swallow up Iriona; and the encroaching pan-American drug trade. Then there's lethal yellowing disease, which ravaged Honduras' coconut palms in the 1990s. For the Garifuna, who use coconut profusely—frying fish and plantains in its oil; making soups, stews, and breads with its milk; cooking its grated meat with ginger and unrefined sugar to make a fudge-like sweet called *dabuledu*—the loss was devastating. Though disease-resistant coconut palms have been introduced, "these are not the ones we're used to," Lina explained. "They have less oil."

Not that I would have known it from the wonderfully rich *alabundigas* and *tapou* and seafood soups I sampled. These Garifuna recipes are strong enough to have weathered the storm—despite the availability of fast foods and supermarket conveniences. "In the city, things have changed because of jobs and school. We have left that kind of cooking for the weekends, but we haven't lost it," said Lina's friend Teofila Valerio, a law student and gifted home cook,



We savored a creamy soup chock-full of tender hunks of conch, and another made with briny she-crabs bursting with roe

as she peeled plantains in the kitchen of her house in La Ceiba. “The lifestyle has changed, but the culture of the Garifuna will not change. The food will not change.”

We had come to watch Teofila, who goes by Teo, make the most beloved of Garifuna dishes, *hudutu*. Prepared traditionally, many Garifuna dishes take a while and some effort to complete. But none match the labor intensiveness of *hudutu*. Both sweet, ripe plantains and unripe ones, which add a starchy consistency, must be boiled and then pounded—and pounded and pounded—to a smooth, dense paste. The paste is served alongside of, and as a utensil for, the fish and coconut stew that completes the dish. Often, Lina said, while the plantains are boiling, “men take a nap and expect to be awakened to do the mashing.”

Since we had no men with us, the job was delegated to Lina. “When they hear the pestle hitting the mortar in the community,” she told me, “people pass by your house and say, ‘Oh, you’re making *hudutu*! That’s a special sound.’” While Lina mashed, Teo prepared the stew. She started with coconut. If this were another dish—if she were making the Garifuna’s sweet coco bread, for instance, which

requires the richest milk—she might have stopped at what they call “first water,” squeezing the grated fruit with only a small amount of water so as not to dilute its aromatic compounds. But for the stew she soaked and strained the grated coconut repeatedly to extract the milk. To that she added cumin, allspice, and a *sofrito*, or flavor base, of diced and sautéed aromatics—garlic, bell peppers, basil, culantro, and oregano, all pulled from her garden. Then, into the pot went thick kingfish steaks marinated in lime. Along with the pounded plantains, the finished stew made a hefty meal. I mopped up the last, luxurious drops with a sleek, sweet-savory hunk of the plantain mash and thought of the man I had met the day before in Corozal. “After I finish *hudutu*,” he had told me, “I go to sleep.”

THE FOLLOWING MORNING, Lina, Teo, and I made the four-and-a-half-hour drive to the municipality of Iriona, traversing highways, forging rivers, and bumping along on country roads walled with coconut palms. Along the way, Lina serenaded us with Garifuna songs: “Meiguada la tia bere, meiguada la, meiguada la.” *May your strength not fall,*

Facing page, clockwise from top left: women harvesting cassava in Ciriboya, Honduras; pumpkin bread (see page 82 for a recipe); chicken stew (see page 82 for a recipe). This page: Garifuna fishermen in Corozal, Honduras.

CONCH A staple of the Caribbean diet, this large sea snail (the meat of one, below) has been harvested as food for centuries in the islands. It is battered and fried, chopped and used in fritters, marinated for salads, and simmered in soups, including the Garifunas' coconut milk-based *irau juyeirugu*. Though its dense, white meat is delicious, it must be tenderized before eating.



CUMIN This Mediterranean spice (below) was brought by the Spanish to Latin America, where it lends its pungent flavor to stews, soups, and other dishes. Garifuna cooks often use it in a ground spice mix called *pimienta y comino* (black pepper and cumin).



CULANTRO A relative of cilantro that's native to the Caribbean and tropical Americas, this herb (below) has long, soft, spiky leaves and a flavor similar to, but stronger than, its cousin's. It is used fresh in dishes all over these regions, including Garifuna *hudutu* and other fish and coconut dishes. It can be found in Latin American grocery stores throughout the United States.



may it not fall, may it not fall.

When we reached our destination in Iriona, the village of Cirioboya, women were gathered around a thatch-roofed hut that serves as a communal kitchen. "The Garifuna community does everything around feasting and food. If there's no food, they will highly complain," said Lina.

The occasion was the 40th birthday of Mirna Ruiz, a taut-muscled, lively woman who is a member of a cassava-producing cooperative that Lina works with. We found Ruiz and her friends at her sister's house, finishing up breakfast—coco bread and cups of porridge-like *adulu*, made with coconut milk and cassava flour, flavored with unrefined sugar and cinnamon—and assembling a few stews. As they cooked, the women bantered in both Spanish and Garifuna, a language derived from their Carib ancestors' but with plenty of African and adopted European words.

Like their language, their cuisine has borrowed from the dominant culture around them, while retaining its distinctly Garifuna character. I was handed a pot of *ari-an guisou*, a spicy-sweet, mestizo-style chicken stew, and instructed to carry it down the road to the thatch-roof hut, where one of the women slid it into wood-fired handmade clay oven. Lina carried the *darasa*, green banana paste steamed in banana leaves harvested from the women's yards. "We call these traveling tamales," Lina said. "They can take away your hunger if you are walking a long distance."

The women here are used to journeys on foot; every week, they trek with their machetes to the steep hillside where they farm cassava. From the long, muddy path up to their high patch of land, the view of their pristine beach is breathtaking. It's easy to see why others would want to take it all from them. But as their men and children leave the village to find work elsewhere, the women have fought to hold on to this land, for cassava's sake. "Ereba nanibei weiyei," said Ruiz. *Cassava bread is my husband.* "Whenever I need some money, I know cassava bread will feed me."

While we celebrated, sitting at tables in the shade of a nance tree and feasting on *guisou*, rice and beans, *darasa*, and caramelly, dense banana and pumpkin breads, the women took turns working over a clay stove inside the thatched-roof hut. Using a hand broom fashioned from shrub branches, they spread cassava flour on a hot iron plate, patted it down with a wooden press, and when the starch had bound the disk-like bread together, they flipped it to toast the other side. Then they swiftly trimmed its edges with a machete, creating a big, bronzed, perfect circle.

"God made people in his image, and he made us Garifuna with our qualities," one proficient breadmaker told me. "When we dance and when we sing and when we eat, we show the world who we are, and we are content. We believe in our ancestors, and they have left us a lot of things: the cassava bread, all our foods."

She handed me a piece of the freshly cooked bread. It was nutty and chewy and smoky; it tasted wonderful. Then we all stood in a circle beneath the nance tree holding hands. Lina led us in prayer, asking God and the Garifuna ancestors for the wisdom and strength they would need to prosper as a community, and giving thanks for the gift of the meal we had all shared.



Members of a cassava bread producing cooperative share a prayer in Cirioboya, Honduras.



Travel Guide Honduras' Garifuna Coast

For information on planning a trip to Honduras, contact Honduras Tourism (800-410-9608; letsgohonduras.com).

WHERE TO EAT

Chef Güity

Beachfront, west of Quinta Real, Zona Viva (504/443-4595; ecohonduras.net). Inexpensive. Sit on the upstairs deck, and enjoy Garifuna foods like tapou (fish, green banana and root vegetable stew).

Restaurante Corozal

Barrio Belize, Corozal (504/9985-4008). Inexpensive. A living primer on Garifuna culture, this canopied restaurant includes a museum. The seafood soup is delicious.

WHAT TO DO

Expovida

(504/9995-8509; expo.vida@yahoo.com). Lina Martinez offers excellent tours to Garifuna communities, including visits with women's cooperatives in Iriona.

Tourist Options

(504/2440-0265; hondurastouristoptions.com). Boat trips to the Garifuna island of Cayos Cochinos include lunch cooked by the community's women.

WHERE TO STAY

Quinta Real Hotel

Barrio La Isla, between Avenue 15 de Septiembre and Avenue Victor Hugo, Zona Viva, La Ceiba; (504/2440-3311; quintarealhotel.com). Rates: \$135-\$220 double.

Many rooms overlook the pool, seaside patio, and bar at this relaxing hotel. Breakfast is included.



From left: a breakfast of coconut bread with cassava porridge; a green banana tamale; fish and coconut stew with mashed plantains.

Ariran Guisou

(Chicken Stew)

SERVES 4

This spicy-sweet chicken stew (pictured on page 78) gets a touch of tartness from fresh lime.

- 2 lb. skinless chicken legs and thighs
- ¼ cup fresh lime juice
- 3 tbsp. Worcestershire sauce
- 2 tsp. sugar
- 2 tsp. dry mustard powder
- 1½ tsp. freshly ground black pepper
- 1 tsp. ground turmeric
- ½ tsp. ground cumin
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 small yellow onion, sliced
- Kosher salt, to taste
- 2 tbsp. canola oil
- 1 red bell pepper, stemmed, seeded, sliced
- 1 cup chicken stock

1 Combine chicken, juice, Worcestershire, sugar, mustard, pepper, turmeric, cumin, garlic, onion, and salt in large bowl; cover with plastic wrap, and let marinate in the refrigerator for at least 1 hour.

2 Heat oil in a 12" skillet over medium-high heat. Add chicken; cook, turning once, until browned, about 8 minutes. Transfer to a plate; set aside. Add onions from marinade and bell pepper to skillet; cook until soft, about 5 minutes. Add reserved chicken and stock; boil. Reduce heat to medium; cook, covered, until chicken is cooked through, about 15 minutes.

Darasa

(Green Banana Tamales)

SERVES 6

These banana tamales (pictured above, center) are a traditional Garifuna snack.

- 7 slightly green bananas, peeled and grated
- ½ cup coconut milk
- ¼ cup fresh orange juice
- 2 tbsp. fresh lime juice
- 1½ tsp. kosher salt
- ½ tsp. freshly ground black pepper
- 6 9"-square banana leaves or parchment paper, for wrapping (see page 92)

1 Stir together bananas, coconut milk, both juices, and salt and pepper in a bowl. Place a scant ¾ cup banana mixture in the center of each banana leaf. Fold the sides over filling, and then fold the open

ends under to form 5" x 3" packets; set aside.

2 Bring 2" water to a boil in an 8-qt. saucepan fitted with a steamer basket over medium-high heat. Place packets in steamer, stacking if necessary, and cover; cook until banana mixture is firm, about 20 minutes. Let cool for 10 minutes before serving.

Fein Tau Weiyema

(Pumpkin Bread)

SERVES 6–8

This dense, puddinglike pumpkin bread (pictured on page 78) makes a rich and satisfying dessert.

- ¼ cup canola oil, plus more for pan
- 2 cups flour, plus more for pan
- 1½ cups sugar
- ¼ cup milk
- 1 tbsp. vanilla extract
- 1½ tsp. ground cinnamon
- ½ tsp. kosher salt
- 2 15-oz. cans pumpkin purée, or 2 lb. pureed, roasted pumpkins or acorn squash

Heat oven to 350°. Grease and flour a 9" round cake pan; set aside. Stir together oil, sugar, milk, vanilla, cinnamon, salt, and pumpkin in a bowl; add flour, and stir until just combined. Pour into prepared pan, and smooth top. Bake until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean, about 1 hour. Cut into squares or wedges to serve.

Fein Tau Faluma tuma Adulu

Tau Yuga

(Coconut Bread with Cassava Porridge)

SERVES 8–10

The quintessential Garifuna breakfast (pictured above, at left) consists of yeasty coconut bread and a warming porridge made with cassava flour.

- 1 tsp. sugar
- 1 ¼-oz. package active dry yeast
- 6½ cups coconut milk
- 1 tbsp. canola oil, plus more for greasing
- 1 tbsp. kosher salt
- 6 cups flour
- 2 cups unsweetened finely shredded coconut
- 8 oz. panela, finely chopped (see page 92), or 1 cup packed dark brown sugar
- 3 cups milk
- ¾ cup cassava flour (see page 92)
- 1 tbsp. unsalted butter
- 2 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1 tsp. ground cinnamon

1 Stir together sugar, yeast, and ¼ cup water, heated to 115°, in a small bowl; let sit until foamy, about 10 minutes. Pour into a bowl along with 2½ cups coconut milk, oil, and salt; stir until smooth. Add flour and coconut; stir until dough forms. Transfer to a floured work surface; knead until smooth, about 8 minutes. Transfer to a lightly greased bowl, cover with plastic wrap, and let sit until doubled in size, about 45 minutes.

2 Punch down dough and divide into 12 equal pieces; shape each piece into a ball, and transfer to 2 parchment paper-lined baking sheets. Cover and let sit until puffed, about 40 minutes.

3 Heat oven to 350°. Bake until golden brown, about 45 minutes. Meanwhile, bring panela, both milks, cassava flour, butter, vanilla, cinnamon, and 4 cups water to a boil in a 4-qt. saucepan over medium heat; cook until thickened, about 20 minutes. Serve with bread on the side.

Hudutu

(Fish and Coconut Stew with Mashed Plantains)

SERVES 4–6

Garifuna cooks make a starchy plantain mash akin to African *fufu* and serve it with this basil-and culantro-laced stew (pictured above, at right).

- 2 lb. skin-on kingfish or swordfish fillets
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- ¼ cup fresh lime juice
- 2 tsp. ground cumin
- 5 cloves garlic, minced
- 6 green plantains, plus 2 ripe plantains, peeled and cut into 2" pieces
- 7 cups coconut milk
- ½ tsp. ground annatto seed (see page 92)
- 6 sprigs culantro or cilantro, chopped
- 4 large basil leaves, chopped
- ½ small yellow onion, minced

1 Season fish with salt and pepper and place in a large resealable plastic bag; add juice, 1 tsp. cumin, and garlic, and toss to combine. Seal bag, and let marinate in the refrigerator for at least 1 hour.

2 Place all plantains in a 6-qt. saucepan of salted water; bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat to medium-low; cook until tender, about 12 minutes. Drain; transfer to a food processor. Season with salt and pepper; purée until smooth, about 5 minutes. Transfer to a bowl and keep warm.

3 Bring coconut milk and 1 cup water to a boil in a 6-qt. saucepan over high heat. Reduce heat to medium, add remaining cumin, annatto, culantro, basil, and onion; cook until onions are soft, about 10 minutes. Add fish along with marinade; cook until fish is tender, about 8 minutes. Ladle soup into bowls and serve alongside plantain mixture.

Iraü Lau Juyeirugu

(Seafood Soup)

SERVES 8

Fresh basil, oregano, and sage lend their fragrance to this hearty soup (pictured on page 75), loaded with five different types of seafood.

½ cup canola oil	
4 cloves garlic, minced	
1 small yellow onion, minced	
1 small green bell pepper, minced	
4 cups coconut milk	
2 cups fish stock	
¼ cup packed basil leaves, thinly sliced	
2 tbsp. finely chopped oregano	
1 tbsp. finely chopped sage	
1½ tsp. ground cumin	
1 tsp. sugar	
1 lb. conch meat, pounded thin and cut into 1" pieces (see page 92)	
8 oz. calamari, sliced crosswise into ¼" rings	
1 lb. large shrimp, peeled and deveined	
8 oz. cooked lobster meat, cut into 1" pieces	
8 oz. mussels, scrubbed and debearded	
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste	
Lime wedges, for serving	

Heat oil in an 8-qt. saucepan over medium-high heat. Add garlic, onion, and bell pepper; cook until golden brown, about 6 minutes. Add coconut milk, stock, basil, oregano, sage, cumin, and sugar; boil. Reduce heat to medium, add conch and calamari, and cook, covered, until tender, about 8 minutes. Add shrimp, lobster, and mussels; cook, covered, until mussel shells open, about 7 minutes more. Season with salt and pepper; serve with lime wedges on the side.

Resanbinsi

(Rice and Beans with Coconut Milk)

SERVES 8-10

Coconut milk is an essential ingredient in many Garifuna dishes, including this creamy take on rice and beans (pictured on page 74).

½ cup canola oil	
5 cloves garlic, minced	
1 small onion, minced	
1 rib celery, minced	
½ small red bell pepper, minced	
2½ cups long-grain white rice	
1½ tsp. ground cumin	
1 tsp. freshly ground black pepper	
1 tsp. sugar	
3½ cups coconut milk	
2 cups chicken stock	
2 15-oz. cans small dark red kidney beans, rinsed and drained	
2 sprigs culantro or cilantro, chopped	
Kosher salt, to taste	

Heat oil in a 6-qt. saucepan over medium-high heat. Add garlic, onion, celery, and bell pepper; cook until soft, about 10 minutes. Add rice, cumin, black pepper, and sugar; cook for 1 minute. Add coconut milk and stock; boil. Reduce heat to medium-low, add beans and culantro, and season with salt; cook, covered and stirring occasionally, until rice is tender, about 30 minutes.

Tapou

(Fish, Green Banana, and Root Vegetable Stew)

SERVES 4-6

Tender root vegetables and fried fish make this garlicky stew (pictured on page 76) a satisfying meal.

2 lb. red snapper filets	
¼ cup fresh orange juice	
2 tbsp. fresh lime juice	
2 tsp. ground cumin	
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste	
¼ cup coconut oil	
5 cloves garlic, minced	
1 medium yellow onion, minced	
1 green bell pepper, stemmed, seeded, and minced	
1 2"-piece ginger, peeled and minced	
1 tsp. dried oregano	
½ tsp. sugar	
1 large ripe tomato, cored and minced	
5 cups coconut milk	
2 tsp. achioite paste (see page 92), mixed with 1 cup boiling water	
2 green bananas, peeled, cut into ¼" slices	
1 small cassava root, peeled, cut into 1" cubes	
1 sweet potato, peeled, cut into 1" cubes	
1 ripe plantain, peeled, cut into ¼" slices	
12 oz. medium shrimp, peeled and deveined	
3 tbsp. roughly chopped cilantro, to garnish	
1 cup canola oil	
½ cup flour	
Cooked white rice, for serving	
Lime wedges, for serving	

1 Place fish in a large plastic bag; add both juices, 1 tsp. cumin, and salt and pepper. Seal bag, and let marinate in the refrigerator for at least 1 hour.

2 Heat coconut oil in an 8-qt. saucepan over medium-high heat. Add garlic, onion, bell pepper, and ginger; cook until soft, about 9 minutes. Add remaining cumin, oregano, sugar, and tomato; cook until lightly caramelized, about 5 minutes. Add coconut milk and achioite paste mixture; boil. Reduce heat to medium, add green bananas and cassava, and cook until just tender, about 10 minutes. Add potato and plantain; cook until tender, about 10 minutes. Add shrimp; cook until just pink, about 3 minutes more. Sprinkle with cilantro; keep stew warm.

3 Heat canola oil in a 12" skillet over medium heat; place flour on a large plate. Remove fish from marinade, dredge in flour, and add to skillet; fry, flipping once, until crisp and cooked through, about 12 minutes. Transfer fish to paper towels to drain. Divide fish among serving bowls, and top with some of the stew; serve with rice and lime wedges.

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2	1 oz squares unsweetened chocolate
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1	tsp light corn syrup
2	Tbs butter
1	tsp vanilla



Slowly melt chocolate in milk. Add sugar & corn syrup. Cook slowly until sugar dissolves. Continue to gently cook until it reaches soft ball stage (234° F), stirring frequently. Remove from heat.

Add butter. Cool at room temperature until lukewarm (110° F) without stirring. Add vanilla. (For variety, add 1/2 cup broken nuts and/or raisins now.)

Beat vigorously until fudge becomes very thick and loses its gloss. Quickly spread in a greased pan. When firm, cut into squares. Or, the fudge may be kneaded when hard, formed into rolls and sliced. Makes approximately 2 dozen pieces.

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IN THE SAVEUR

KITCHEN

Discoveries and Techniques From Our Favorite Room in the House » Edited by Todd Coleman

Sugar and Spice

Every fall, as the *SAVEUR* kitchen fills up with pumpkins, pecans, maple syrup, and the rest of the classic Thanksgiving ingredients, we start dreaming of creative ways to use them. This issue's recipes for roasted sugar-glazed pears and pumpkin cheesecake (see "A Bountiful Shore," page 58) set the bar high: The elements are absolutely canonical, but reinterpreted, they let some fresh air into our holiday traditions. Like many cooks at Thanksgiving time, we relish introducing new dishes to complement the old standbys, and so came up with the following fresh takes on the holiday dessert, designed to pique the appetite even after all the excesses of the feast. —*Ben Mims*

Pumpkin and Bourbon Mousse

SERVES 4–6

Bring 2" water to a boil in a 4-qt. saucepan over medium-high heat. Place a medium metal bowl over pan, and add $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar, 6 tbsp. bourbon, $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. each kosher salt, ground ginger, and ground cinnamon, $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. each freshly grated nutmeg and ground cloves, and 8 egg yolks; whisk together, and cook, whisking constantly, until thickened and pale, about 6 minutes. Remove from the heat and set bourbon mixture aside. In another bowl, whisk 8 egg whites in a bowl until stiff peaks form; add 1 cup canned pumpkin, and fold until almost combined. Add mixture to warm bourbon mixture and fold together until smooth. Divide among serving glasses and sprinkle with orange zest; serve immediately.



Maple Pot de Crème

SERVES 8

Heat oven to 350°. Combine 2 tbsp. packed light brown sugar, $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. kosher salt, 3 egg yolks, 2 whole eggs, and $\frac{1}{2}$ vanilla bean, halved lengthwise and seeds scraped and reserved, in a medium bowl until smooth. Add 1½ cups milk, 1½ cups heavy cream, and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup amber Grade B maple syrup, and whisk until smooth; pour through a fine strainer into a large glass measuring cup, and divide among eight 4-oz. ramekins or custard cups. Place ramekins in the bottom of a large roasting pan and place in oven; pour boiling water into pan until it comes halfway up sides of ramekins. Bake until custards are set on top but slightly loose in the middle, about 1 hour. Remove from water bath and let cool; refrigerate until chilled, at least 2 hours. Serve with dollops of whipped cream on top, if you like.

Pecan Pie Brittle

MAKES ONE 12" X 16" SHEET

Heat 2 cups sugar in a 4-qt. saucepan over medium-high heat; cook, swirling pan often, until golden amber and completely liquefied. Add 2½ cups broken pecans and 6 tbsp. unsalted butter, cubed, and cook, stirring, until caramel is liquid again and butter is absorbed, about 2 minutes. Combine 1 tbsp. vanilla extract and $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. baking soda in a bowl and then add to pan along with 1 tsp. kosher salt; stir to combine. Pour onto a baking sheet lined with foil or a silicone baking mat and spread into an even layer with a small rubber spatula; let cool completely. Break into bite-size pieces and store in an airtight container between sheets of wax paper.



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CUTTING EDGE

After all the loving care that goes into the preparation of the Thanksgiving turkey, you certainly don't want to mangle it when it comes to carving. A classic carving knife has a blade designed with such concerns in mind: long, to slice through in fewer strokes, as sawing the meat tends to press out the juices; and narrow, to minimize resistance. ① **Wüsthof's Classic 8" Carving Knife** has a high-carbon stainless steel blade that holds a very sharp edge. It's forged from a single piece of steel that runs all the way through the center of the handle—the term for this is full tang—which makes it easy to maneuver. ② The **Kanemasa 10.5" Pointed Sashimi Knife**'s beveled carbon steel blade was designed to slice raw fish, but it cuts turkey, too, with remarkable precision. ③ Another full tang knife, the **Shun Reserve Slicing Knife** has a forged nickel and stainless steel blade pocked with thousands of tiny indentations, as well as larger dents along both sides, both of which reduce the surface area that comes in contact with the meat, and therefore the friction of slicing. ④ Electric knives, a throwback to the 1960s, don't get the love they once did. But the **Cuisinart CEK-40 Electric Knife**'s powerful motor, which gives the blade a fast vibration that causes it to glide right through meat, could spark a renaissance. —*Kellie Evans*

In the Saveur Library

Five Thanksgiving Books

AMERICA HAS BUT one great, official feast each year, but there are plenty of books on the topic.

Here are a few volumes, new and old, that we found invaluable as we put together this issue's Thanksgiving stories.

Every one is well worth consulting as you plan your own holiday feast. *Thanksgiving: How to Cook It Well* (Random House, 2012), a lighthearted manual from former *New York Times* restaurant critic Sam Sifton, includes everything from discussions of cookware (a luxurious French-style roasting pan, for instance, versus a simple one large enough to hold the bird) to recipes for the basics—from green beans to pan gravies—peppered with witty asides throughout. For an historical perspective on the centerpiece

of the feast, we recommend Andrew F. Smith's *The Turkey: An American Story* (University of Illinois Press, 2006), which traces the bird's journey from its native North America

to the tables of Europe and, finally, to its status as an American icon. *Giving Thanks: Thanksgiving Recipes and History, from Pilgrims to Pumpkin Pie* (Clarkson Potter, 2005), by Kathleen Curtis, staff historian at Plymouth Plantation in Massachusetts, and Sandra Oliver, author of "Home Slice" (see page 44), is equal parts history and cookbook. It's full of surprising facts (the only documented menu items at the first Thanks-

giving were deer and wildfowl), and offers inspiring recipes for any turkey day feast, from the quintessential—see Mrs. Henderson's 1882 oyster stuffing—to newer favorites, like *pavo relleno con moros*, Cuban-style turkey stuffed with black beans and rice. First-time hosts might consider Rick Rodgers' comprehensive *Thanksgiving 101: Celebrate America's Favorite Holiday with America's Thanksgiving Expert* (HarperCollins, 2007). Rodgers maps out the meal down to the last detail, including menu planning and how to time food preparation, as well as advice on important matters such as choosing the right turkey—try wild birds for robust flavor, avoid frozen ones when possible—and recip-

pes beginning with starters like spiced walnuts and ending with finales like pumpkin-hazelnut pie. Though *Foods of the Americas: Native Recipes and Traditions* (Ten Speed Press, 2004) is not a Thanksgiving book,



per se, author Fernando Divina, in collaboration with the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian, nevertheless traces the deepest roots of our Thanksgiving traditions. Each chapter opens with an essay by a member of an indigenous community, followed by recipes, like venison with juniper and wild huckleberry sauce and maple syrup pie, that brilliantly showcase the New World ingredients for which we will always be thankful. —Felicia Campbell

JAMES OSELAND (5)

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An advertisement for Nielsen-Massey Madagascar Bourbon Pure Vanilla Extract. It features a close-up of a dish of dessert, possibly vanilla cake or custard, with red fruit compote. To the right is a small bottle of Nielsen-Massey vanilla extract. The Nielsen-Massey logo is at the bottom left, and a QR code is at the bottom right.

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Pumpkin Picking

When it comes to making pumpkin pie, as food historian Sandra Oliver points out in her story "Home Slice" (page 44), not all of the variously colored and shaped pumpkins, gourds, and squashes available at this time of year are created equal. We were eager to see which ones work best, so we asked John Ackerman, who grows more than 160 varieties on Ackerman Farms in Morton, Illinois, to send us his most pie-friendly varieties—all of which can be found at farmers' markets and at Whole Foods around the country. Here is what we found out. —Justin Kennedy and Kellie Evans



Dickinson (left), a beige, football-shaped variety, is the kind that's typically canned. It has very firm, deep-orange flesh that makes a purée with a wonderful, honeyed flavor. A particularly moist variety, once roasted and puréed, it should be sautéed for about five minutes over high heat to cook off excess moisture.



Long neck (above), named for its swan-like arc, outwardly resembles the butternut squash, but the soft, cantaloupe-colored flesh, less sweet than butternut's and far more fibrous, requires longer puréeing than some other varieties.



The stout **kabocha squash** (above), with its tough peach-colored flesh, can be used in pie only if boiled. Roasting will not sufficiently tenderize the flesh and will make for a chalky consistency once the pumpkin is puréed.



Small, spherical **winter luxury pie** (above) has a distinctive lacy webbing on its skin, and flesh similar in texture to an acorn squash's, though not as sweet in flavor. It makes a wonderfully silky pie filling, but take care not to over-purée it.

SAVEUR READER SERVICE



Diminutive, dark green-and orange-skinned **acorn squash** (left), a variety found in most supermarkets at this time of year, has tender golden flesh that makes a candy-sweet, creamy purée with a similar texture to that of puréed cooked carrots.



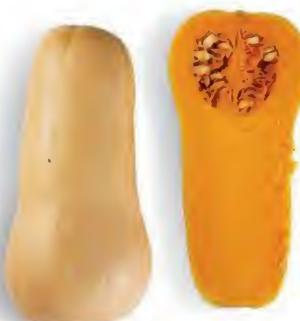
Round and ridged like the iconic jack-o'-lantern, only with skin an otherworldly shade of gray-green, **jarrahdale** (above) has tough orange flesh that makes a purée as sweet and luscious as mashed sweet potatoes. This variety also has an abundance of seeds that are terrific for roasting; toss them with a neutral-tasting oil, a little salt, and any spices you like, and roast on a baking sheet at 350 degrees until crisp, about 15 minutes.



Pink banana (left), as the name would suggest, is a long, narrow variety with pale, rosy-colored skin, and its soft, gently sweet, apricot-colored flesh is similar in consistency to a mashed banana's when roasted and puréed. Once baked in a crust along with cream, eggs, and the other pumpkin pie ingredients, it makes an especially dense filling with a concentrated, caramelized sweetness.



Buff-colored, with a squat, flattened form like a wheel of cheese, **cheddar cheese** (above) has vivid orange flesh. Like the dickinson variety (opposite page), once roasted and puréed, this pumpkin must be cooked further to eliminate excess moisture.



Another variety that's widely available in supermarkets across the country, **butternut squash** (above) lends itself brilliantly to pie filling. Its flesh is softer and sweeter than that of larger pumpkins, and its thin skin is easy to peel.

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THE PANTRY

A Guide to Resources

In producing the stories for this issue, we discovered ingredients and information too good to keep to ourselves. Please feel free to raid our pantry!

BY BEN MIMS

Fare

For our favorite brands of rock and rye liqueur, order Jacquin's Rock & Rye bourbon whiskey liqueur, available from Wine Chateau (\$17 for a 750-ml bottle; 800/946-3190; www.winechateau.com). For information on where to purchase Hochstadter's Slow and Low, contact Cooper Spirits International (212/560-9600). For our favorite brands of cranberry preserves (see page 27), order Anarchy in a Jar Tipsy Quince & Cranberry Chutney, available seasonally from late September through February, from Siff Foods (\$8.75 for a 4-ounce jar; 718/472-0600; siffoods.com); Saucy by Nature Cranberry Pear Sauce, available seasonally from select Dean & DeLuca locations or online from Saucy by Nature (\$13.99 for two 6-ounce jars; saucybynature.com); Wilkin & Sons Limited Tiptree Organic Wild Cranberry Sauce, available from MyBrands (\$7.29 for a 7.5-ounce jar; 888/281-6400; mybrands.com); HeathGlen Cranberry Port Wine and Sage Chutney, available mid-October through mid-April from HeathGlen (\$8 for an 8-ounce jar; 651/464-5290; heathglen.com); and Confituras Cranberry Cinnamon Jam, available online in November and December from Confituras (\$8 for an 8-ounce jar; confituras.net).

Cellar

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To make the Tunisian tuna sandwich recipe (see page 56), buy harissa, available from Netgrocer.com (\$10.65 for a 10-ounce jar; 888/638-4762; netgrocer.com). The Spice House also sells ras el hanout (\$5.99 for a 2-ounce jar), which you will use in the Algerian crêpes recipe (see page 56).

Garifuna

To make the green banana tamales recipe (see page 82), buy banana leaves, available from Grocery Thai (\$4.99 for a 1-pound pack; 818/469-9407; grocerrythai.com). To prepare the coconut bread with cassava porridge recipe (see page 82), use cassava flour, available from Shikenan African Shop (\$4.25 for a 32-ounce bag; 240/200-0037; shiknan.com). To make the fish and coconut stew with mashed plantains recipe (see page 82), purchase ground annatto seed, available from Spices For Less (\$1.99 for a 2-ounce container; 855/269-7742; spicesforless.com). To prepare the fish, green banana, and root vegetable stew recipe (see page 83), use achiote paste, available from Buy Asian Foods.com (\$4.75 for a 15-ounce box; 888/598-9961; buyasianfoods.com).

Kitchen

To order our favorite pumpkins for pumpkin pie (see page 85), contact John Ackerman at Ackerman Farms (27158 U.S. Highway 150, Morton, IL, 61550; 309/231-7429; john@ackermanfarms.com). For our favorite carving knives, purchase Shun's 10" Hollow Ground Slicer, available from Williams-Sonoma (\$319.95; 877/812-6235; williams-sonoma.com); Wusthof's 8" Classic Carving Set, available from Cooking.com (\$149.95 for a knife and carving fork; 800/663-8810; cooking.com); Kanemasa's 10.5" Pointed Sashimi Knife, available from J.B. Prince (\$179; 800/473-0577; jbprince.com); and Cuisinart's Electric Knife, available from Cuisinart (\$49.95; 800/211-9604; cuisinart.com).

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MOMENT



TIME 6:20 P.M., November 27, 2003

PLACE Baghdad, Iraq

Far from his home in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, U.S. Army Specialist Christian Ericson pauses to pray before sharing a Thanksgiving meal with fellow members of the 3rd Brigade, 1st Armored Division.

PHOTOGRAPH BY JOE RAEDLE/GETTY IMAGES



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